

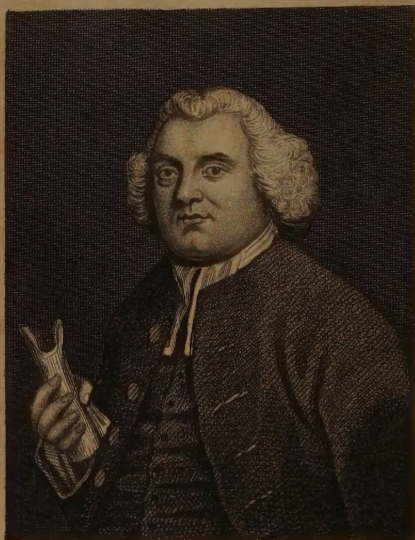


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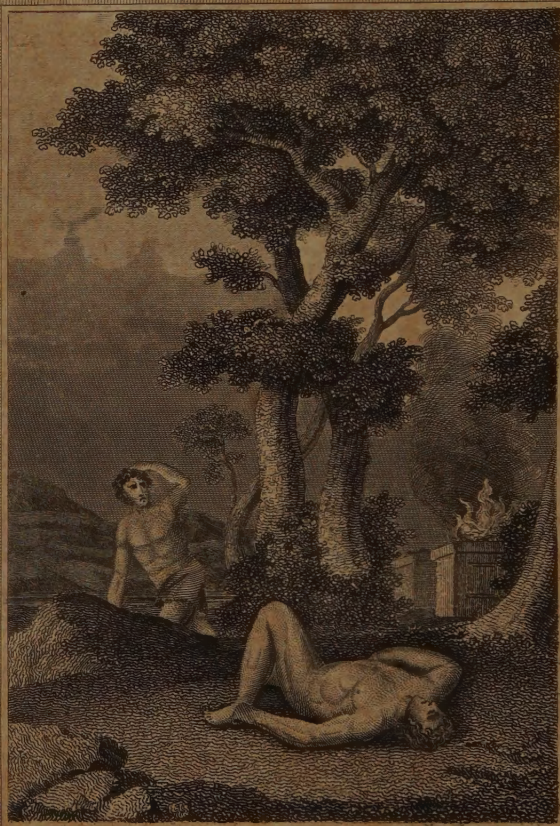


Whitlock. sculp.

REV. JOHN MACGOWAN. A.M.

Late Minister of the Gospel.

DEVONSHIRE SQUARE. LONDON.



Death OF Abel.

THE
DEATH OF ABEL,

from the German of

GESNER.

to which is added the

DEATH OF CAIN.

and the

Life and Death of Adam.

BY KLOPSTOCK.

also the

LIFE OF JOSEPH.

and



DEATH A VISION.

(BY JOHN MACGOWAN.)

LONDON.

PUBLISHED BY JOHN BENNETT, THREE TEN PASSAGE, IN LANE, NEAR ST. MARK'S CHURCH.

1831.

MEMOIRS
OF
SOLOMON GESSNER

AUTHOR OF
THE DEATH OF ABEL.

SOLOMON GESSNER was born at Zurich, the 1st of April, 1730. His father, Conrad Gessner, was member of the Great Council. The family of Gessner, had to boast of having produced more than one celebrated writer, more than one man of first-rate talents. Conrad Gessner, of the 16th century, had acquired the surname of the German Pliny; and by the most indefatigable application had, in spite of great indigence and misfortunes in life, raised himself to the reputation of one of the most distinguished men of learning, a man of universal knowledge. A great portion of the merit and knowledge of this celebrated man, has in our times been inherited by one of his great grandsons, the naturalist, John Gessner, who died a few years ago, and who was less known by the small number of his writings than by the esteem and friendship of the great Haller. The useful labours of his brother, Jacob Gessner, relative to the knowledge of medals and coins, are well known to the lovers of that science.

The first years of our author's youth afforded no favourable ground of hope: unfortunately considerable obstacles presented themselves to the expansion of his natural genius. In his father's house his education was confided to an

was happy to amuse his little sisters. It was to gratify this inclination that he devoted the greatest part of his leisure hours, and it was for the same object that he reserved every penny that he could save.

To this first employment of young Gessner another was soon added. By a fortunate accident the history of Robinson Crusoe fell into his hands. Immediately our little artist became an author, a little imitation of Robinson Crusoe sprung from his head, and all the paper he could get was filled with it. But this new occupation of his juvenile faculties still cost him much trouble, and the profession of an author succeeded no better with him in his father's house than that of an artist at school. His preceptor having discovered the secret of this new amusement, instead of rejoicing at this effort of activity on the part of a boy, who hitherto had been considered as an idler, instead of deriving from thence the means of seasonably directing his taste and disposition, he saw in it only the extreme injury which such a fancy must necessarily cause to the study of the ancient languages, or rather to the miserable task of learning by heart the vocabulary and rudiments. He was resolved therefore at once to beat down so alarming a disposition, by the force of the most disagreeable impressions; the first fruits of our young author were, in consequence, remunerated in a manner suited to disgust him for ever as a writer. But these measures were calculated to operate only on a weak mind, not on one where the fire of genius already lay concealed. He continued his work not with less ardour, but with more circumspection; the fruit of this labour was a multiplicity of essays of this kind, large bundles of which he burnt a short time before his death. All that is known of the contents and character of these romances, is, that his Robinsons were all violent smokers, and that he continually let loose upon them the hurricanes and tempests.

The influence which these occupations had on his progress in the study of languages, became every day more perceptible, and the injury which it did to his advancement from one class to another, more remarkable. Complaints of the incapacity and stupidity of young Gessner became stronger and more frequent, and caused to his family the most sensible mortification.

The author of a panegyrick on Gessner, published at Paris in 1774, asserts that Bodmer himself, that Socrates of his country, who knew how to awaken the genius of so many, was totally deceived respecting the disposition of young Gessner. He assures us, that his father having introduced young Gessner to him, and requested him to try if it were possible to bring forth a spark of talents from him; Bodmer, after a slight examination, sent him back with an assurance not very consoling, that there was no ground to hope that he could ever learn any thing but to read and write, and the first rules of arithmetic.

I cannot warrant the truth of this anecdote, but I know from the first source, that Mr. Simler, the inspector, known as a literary man by his very curious collection of documents, relative to the ecclesiastical history of Switzerland, raised the dejected spirits of the family of Gessner by the most consoling hopes; he said that he perceived in this youth latent talents which must sooner or later develop themselves, and raise him far above the mediocrity of the most distinguished of his companions.

It is frequently remarked that children are better judged of, and more correctly appreciated by their young companions and play-fellows than by their parents or teachers. For the faculties to display themselves, it is necessary they should have a fit opportunity, and it is not in the first instruction which the mind receives that it always finds it; and although it should, yet it may not be such an oppor-

tunity as it likes. It is in common life, and in the intercourse with his equals, that every one shews his disposition, and takes that rank which is suitable to his genius. There, if a young man be not kept back by his natural timidity, by some defect either mental or corporeal, and yet is neglected, the cause does not arise so much from the caprice of his companions as from the real want of those qualities in which he is deficient. He who attains the distinction of guiding others, and becomes the king of their games, is less indebted to the partiality of a blind choice than to a more enlightened estimate of their true interests. At this early period of life, false pride, and all those little passions which overturn the natural state of political society, have but a weak influence. The child does not yet run after illusions, but after amusement, and willingly yields to whoever can with more certainty procure more of it for him than he can himself. I think it will be generally admitted as certain, that the esteem of this age always implies the possession of some striking qualities, though not always of those most essential. A boy distinguished by his equals, therefore, is never destitute of talents.

This was the case with young Gessner. His companions in their plays and amusements generally appointed him their leader and director; which proves they entertained a better opinion of him than his preceptors, who knew not what to do with him, though his companions found him very fit to be employed in their games, and were not ashamed to yield to him the first place, though in school he was obliged to be contented with the last. Thus his dislike to scholastic studies was not the result, as we have seen, of a predilection for idleness, or a dulness of disposition, arising from stupidity. He always wished to do something, but never any thing but that which was agreeable to him.

The parents of young Gessner seeing all their endeavours

to advance him at school fail, determined at length to try an expedient, which was often adopted with success with boys of that disposition, and who before had been despaired of. The effect which transplanting produces on vegetables, the change of place and circumstance often produces in like manner on the human species. New situations, new objects, excite new ideas; new impressions weaken the old, and facilitate the developement of those powers and faculties, the buds of which were perhaps kept back so long only by the association of unfavourable ideas.

A clergyman in the country, the father of the Canon Vœgueli, had, by the education he gave his own son, merited the favourable opinion which had been entertained of his knowledge in scholastic learning, and of his talent for teaching. To his house young Gessner was sent as a boarder. There our young man could respire; after the persecutions of his weak preceptors, after the reproaches of ignorance and incapacity, with which he had been constantly assailed, and the daily humiliation of seeing himself surpassed in all the exercises of his studies by the weakest of his companions. Under a superintendence more mild and more enlightened, his mind elevated itself to better resolutions. He could not, however, hope all at once to repair his loss of time. The fundamental study of languages, a dry and methodical instruction were not well adapted to a mind already too habituated to more agreeable occupations. It was therefore necessary that he should confine himself to a superficial knowledge of the ancient languages. Nevertheless he made a sufficient progress to be able to read some of the Latin poets in the original, and some of the Greek in the Latin version. He preferred, through a peculiar motive, the literal versions to the best French and German translations. His want of erudition was fully supplied by a poetical instinct, a just and delicate feeling, which grasped the hidden beauties of these great models with more sensibility and correctness

than the most minute and critical knowledge of languages could have effected.

His studies with the son of his host became also very useful to him. Young Vœgueli was not only a passionate admirer of the ancients, he had also a taste for all the branches of elegant literature, and read with much eagerness the best writers of Germany, particularly the poets. It was through him that Gessner became acquainted with the works of Brock, and the reading of these lighted in his mind a spark which soon kindled to a blaze. He devoured this book with an avidity which could only be equalled by the warmth with which he often afterwards, at a more advanced age, described himself the extreme happiness he enjoyed from this first friend of his poetical life, insomuch that he never forgot it. Even after having read the best poets, ancient and modern, after having himself given in his works inimitable models, the poems of Brock, at this day so forgotten, were always dear to him; he read them repeatedly from time to time with pleasure. It cannot be doubted that this exact painter of nature was his first guide in the delineation of certain beauties of description, in that fidelity of design which gives to all his pictures a character so new and so true. But he copied from him only as an artist of genius, from a master of mediocrity. The correctness of his own judgment, and delicacy of his sensibility, soon made him perceive how much littleness and poverty existed in the accumulated details of the poet of Hamburgh, and this he took care to avoid.

The developement of the poetical talents of Gessner, first excited by his intercourse with the muse of Brock, was still singularly aided by all the relative circumstances of his situation. Berg, which is the name of the place where he then lived, is situated in one of the most agreeable countries of the Canton of Zurich. Nature, in all her

beauty, there displayed to his view all those charms with which the inhabitants of cities are unacquainted. There his senses, of which nothing had yet impaired the sensibility, could taste all the enjoyment of a free and pure air, a beautiful sky, enamelled meadows, the sweet murmur of rivulets, the waving verdure of the fields, and the gloomy shades of the forest.

There his mind, susceptible of all the soft impressions, conceived the first traits of that world of imagination, which he soon after peopled with all those charming beings which the happy magic of his fancy brought forth. He had chosen his favourite retreat in a grove sufficiently distant from the village. There he often used to retire with his friend Brock. Hid in this retreat, he used to listen to the delightful melody of the birds, and the pleasing murmurs of a neighbouring spring.

Hitherto Gessner had been constantly influenced by the impetuous vivacity of youth ; he lived only for the transient enjoyment of the present moment ; but, at this period, all the tender sympathies of the soul were awakened, his mind at the same time assumed more firmness, and his character more stability.

The daughter of his host, young, amiable, and full of sensibility, was in his society every day : the sweetness of her disposition, and the youthful charms of her person, soon gained the empire of his heart. This circumstance accelerated the maturity of his passion, the most pleasing of the blessings attached to the destiny of man, whose power awakens all the faculties of our soul, softens all our manners, ennobles all our sentiments, and diffuses over all around us an inexpressible charm.

How could the mind of Gessner resist the torrent of

sentiments and images with which it was then assailed ; a soul such as his could not receive such impressions without creating new ones, a heart like his must feel the necessity of communicating its feelings to those around it, were it even reduced to the necessity, like Orpheus, of charming only rocks and trees.

Berg appears therefore to have been the cradle of the muse of Gessner. A very considerable number of poetical essays, which, if we may judge not only by the character of the writing, by their numerous orthographical errors, but also by the subject and manner, should be the first, belong evidently to this period of his life. His genius scarce awake, appears in them to endeavour to find itself ; it tries different manners, and seeks to prove its strength in various modes ; these are in succession, his poems in blank verse, and in rhyme, prose mixed with verse, fables, tales, satires, and Anacreontic odes.

In some of those pieces, though in few, sensible traces of Brock's manner are discoverable ; the affectation of minute detail, the profusion of descriptive epithets. In others we think we already discover the more manly touch of Hagedorn. Others again, by traits of the most delicate sentiment, or sprightly vivacity, might deserve to be compared to the best pieces of Gleim.

There is not one of these essays of the youth, or rather infancy, of his genius, but gives earnest of a future great poet. We frequently find in them the most charming fancies, images, which surprise us not less by their novelty, than they enchant us by their natural grace. There constantly reigns throughout them a pure simplicity, which, remote from all affectation, disdains all borrowed splendour, and seeks not to dazzle ; a happy simplicity, the infallible characteristic of true genius. Upon the whole, we discover through all these essays, the dawn of talent, to

which nothing more is wanting but the practice of the mechanical part of the art to produce great works.

After having passed near two years at Berg, Gessner returned to his father's. It is supposed, his mind entirely devoted to poetry, without having formed any settled plan, as well as without any anxiety for the future, voluntarily relinquished to his parents the entire disposition of his life, provided the condition to which they destined him was not too contrary to his favourite taste. It was a reservation to which his relations fortunately were willing to agree.

His father was a bookseller. Young Gessner conceived that with a business which allowed Richardson to compose all his voluminous works, a poet could likewise find time to live and enjoy himself: his sagacity went perhaps still further; he perceived that the task of continuing a business of this kind, already established, would leave for his studies much more leisure than any other plan of life of which it would be necessary to prepare the means long beforehand, and which would consequently require a more rigid application. He also probably thought more of those books which he should have the pleasure of reading and writing than of those he should have the pleasure of selling. It is certain that he scarcely disturbed the happiness he enjoyed by any very serious reflections on the future.

The residence of Gessner, in the country, was very favourable to the developement of his genius; and his situation, on his return to Zurich, not less so; he soon sought the acquaintance of the young men then most distinguished, and in a short time attracted their attention.

He frequently visited at the house of Mr. Khon, where Klopstock lived after he had quarrelled with Bodmer: the father was a man of great information, of a very cultivated mind, and great knowledge of the world; his sons

distinguished themselves by their intelligence and truly original wit; their house was the general rendezvous of men of distinguished talents; there Gessner became acquainted with several young men, with whom he afterwards contracted an intimate friendship; of this number were Steinbrychel, Tobler, and Schulthess, the translator of several Greek philosophers.

In a daily intercourse with such men, Gessner necessarily acquired much in a short time; all excelled him in science; they had studied better than him, not only the ancient literature, but also the chief works of the French, English, and German learning; their society made him acquainted with several works of merit; corrected his mode of thinking on different subjects; enlightened his mind on topics of which he had only a confused notion; and gave to his principles more justice and precision.

Some sheets of poetry, separated from those mentioned before, should no doubt belong to this period of his life. It is the second epoque of his poetical talent, between the age of eighteen and twenty-one.

In these second essays his choice seems to be more fixed: with the exception of two or three pieces, they are all love sonnets, of the same measure with those of Anacreon; there are some of them in which may be found the pleasing warmth of imagination, and gaiety of thought, of that poet, that delicacy of sentiment, and native simplicity, which distinguish him.

We have already seen how Gessner employed those hours which were destined for school; to the passion which he had for modelling in wax, soon succeeded that for drawing; for a long time it was nothing more than a mere taste for imitation, and the pleasure of gratifying this natural disposition; he had never entertained an idea of

becoming what is termed an artist; he never even dreamt of abridging, by any rules or instruction, the difficulties which lay in his way, but laboured without plan, drawing whatever came into his head sometimes from nature, sometimes from fancy, and sometimes from any models of art, which he accidentally met with.

A particular circumstance, which occurred to him in the year 1749, nearly determined him from thenceforth to make this amusement a serious occupation, and to devote himself entirely to painting.

It was in that year he made a journey to Berlin. His father had placed him in the house of an eminent bookseller, to qualify him to fill that situation for which he intended him: his new master undertook to perfect his instruction, with a degree of accuracy rather too minute; he thought fit to make him pass through all the gradations of his profession, and employed him at first in arranging the parcels, in making up packets, in short, in every thing necessary to form an excellent shop-boy.

Gessner, who for some time past entertained a favourable opinion of his own talents, found these occupations by no means suited to his taste; on the other hand, the brilliancy of a great capital, and the alluring variety of its pleasures, incessantly invited him to new avocations: the visits of his young countrymen, who had not come to Berlin to be engaged in business, but to see the world and enjoy themselves, soon rendered his situation wholly insupportable: without much consideration he adopted his resolution, after withdrawing from his dull overseer; he took a lodging in the city, where, according to his new determination, he would give himself up, without interruption, to his taste for the fine arts, and for society.

His parents disapproved much of this precipitate step:

they saw evidently in the boldness of this resolution a determined effort to disengage himself at once from the painful burden of business, to free himself from every kind of subjection, and to give himself up, without restraint, to all the amusements of the place where he resided.

To call him back to order, they imagined nothing could be better than to make him feel his dependance; the bills which he drew were not immediately paid, and Gessner found himself in embarrassment; he had a sure mode of extricating himself, and it was upon the presumption of his adopting it, that his remittances were stopped: but the disposition of this young man, and his notion of honour, would not allow him to have recourse to it; he therefore employed his mind to find out some expedient to relieve him from all humiliation, in seeking for assistance elsewhere; and when he thought he had discovered it, he shut himself up in his room. From this moment his friends neither saw nor heard any more of him; nobody knew what was become of him.

After secluding himself for some weeks, he went to Hempel, the painter of the court, whose friendship he had before sought and obtained; he requested him to follow him to his lodgings; all the walls of his apartment were covered with landscapes, which he had just finished; he there conjured Hempel, to tell him candidly, if, after these specimens, he thought him capable of attaining such a proficiency in the art, as might not only assure him the means of living, but also some esteem and consideration.

Hempel viewed his paintings a long time with silent attention: the artist at length asked him from what originals he had copied? Gessner assured him it was all his own invention, and told him at the same time, how unhappy he was that his pictures would not dry: it was

because he had mixed his colours with sallad oil instead of linseed : Hempel burst out a laughing, and said, ‘ Come, I see you have not long followed the profession ; but a beginner, who is unacquainted with the rudiments, and composes such works, what may he not produce in ten years time !’

Gessner, nevertheless, did not find himself compelled to have recourse to new resources ; his parents were soon reconciled with him ; he was even permitted to prolong his stay at Berlin, and to follow his inclination ; he enjoyed the pleasures of life, and the amusements of the great world, with all the vivacity of a young man, now, for the first time, freed from all controul, but with more prudence than is usually possessed at his age, and without ever losing sight of a great and dignified object : the gay companions of his youth did not possess him exclusively ; he was as often found in societies where he might derive instruction, as in those where he sought only for amusement ; he visited men of letters and artists, and was intimately acquainted with Krause, Hempel, Ramler and Sulzer.

He was more particularly intimate with Ramler ; they often saw each other, and dined together ; and Gessner had frequently the pleasure of admiring the correctness of ear, delicacy of sentiment, and distinguished pronunciation of this celebrated man, then so well known by the pure elegance of his poems, and by the rigid severity of his criticisms.

It was not till after a considerable time, that Gessner’s timidity allowed him to shew him some of his essays. Ramler discovered in them talents worthy of encouragement ; but his ear, which no beauty of composition could deceive, attended with suspicious vigilance to every syllable, every fleeting sound which could wound it ; with him

it was not only some slight negligence of versification, some harsh-sounding word, some inharmonious measure, which he would expunge, but entire verses, which he would not allow to be poetry.

How disappointed was Gessner! he thought he could polish the asperities with a file, but he was often sent back to the anvil. Contemplating all the difficulties with which a Swiss finds himself embarrassed by the great difference of his dialect from the pure German measure, he despaired of ever being able to bind himself up to rules so strict. — Ramler, who perceived his embarrassment, advised him to resolve his verses into elegant and harmonious prose.

This anecdote, which Ramler himself told shortly after, furnishes, perhaps, the best solution for explaining why Gessner voluntarily gave up an advantage, which no poet before him conceived he could dispense with, which had never been allowed to any other, and had even been thought essential to poetry.

Gessner having discovered that the defect of his verses belonged less to the incorrectness of his ear, than to the vicious dialect of his country, justly concluded that a metred prose would please his readers, while a single verse, badly turned, would spoil a whole poem. It was for this reason that he composed but a few little pieces in verse, and that, even in the number of these, there are some which he has printed like prose.

After Ramler had put into verse some poems of Gessner, they appeared in two small volumes at Berlin: but it is a question of some doubt, whether, by this compliment, or the advice which he first gave, he most contributed to the reputation of his friend.

From Berlin Gessner went to Hamburgh; he had got a letter of recommendation to Hagedorn; but before he presented it, he wished to be acquainted with this father of German poetry, without the introduction of any other person, and try if he could merit his regard on his own account; he accordingly went to the coffee-house which Hagedorn frequented, watching a fit opportunity of speaking to him; he soon found it, and succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectation: he had read the works of this charming poet with transport; his conversation appeared to him not less agreeable than his writings; Hagedorn was also much pleased with the company of the young stranger; they frequently met each other; at length Hagedorn desired to know who the stranger was, for whom he had already conceived so strong a friendship.

It was not till then that Gessner presented his letter of recommendation, adding, that he was ambitious of rendering himself worthy of his esteem and friendship, which was the motive that brought him to Hamburgh.

After what had already passed, we may easily conceive how well this declaration was received. Hagedorn invited him to his house, introduced him to all his friends, among whom were some of the most distinguished literary characters; and while Gessner continued at Hamburgh, Hagedorn was never seen without him; and so permanent was their friendship, that Gessner never after heard the name of Hagedorn, without expressing by his countenance the liveliest marks of satisfaction and pleasure.

Gessner at length returned to Zurich; he had acquired by his travels a more correct and refined taste, with that species of polish, without which even a work of genius cannot please true connoisseurs, nor secure a permanent success.

Till that period, art and study had done but little for him, nature and his good fortune almost all ; and both the one and the other, seemed ever after to regard him as their favourite.

The era of his youth could not have occurred at a more favourable time, had it happened twenty years sooner, when, both in Switzerland and Germany, the ancient poets were read only to learn their language, when the German poetry was itself considered only as a useless amusement for idle minds ; his modest muse, without doubt, would not have obtained any of those encouragements, of which it stood in need, and even when it had surmounted the temporary prejudices, how many obstacles must not the rigid severity, and religious bigotry of his fellow citizens, have interposed to impede his career ; his *Daphnis* and the *Idyls* would have been looked on as writings calculated to corrupt the morals of mankind ; the *Death of Abel* would have passed for a profanation of the holy Scriptures, and the censors of that time would not have allowed the publication of that charming poem. Twenty years later he would have been obliged to give up that approbation which every writer first plumes himself upon, that of his own nation ; or, to flatter its vitiated taste, follow the example of many other men of talents, and sacrifice to an over-refinement, to the marvellous, and to exaggeration, the adorable simplicity of those pictures from nature, so true, so free from affectation, but at the same time so sure of captivating the admiration of the most enlightened men of the age in which he lived, and of the remotest posterity.

The period at which Gessner appeared was precisely the most favourable, both for developing his genius and extending his fame. When he was upwards of twenty, *Gottsched*, formerly so celebrated, but now sunk into insignificance, gave the first impulse to the revolution which

took place in the empire of German literature ; but was soon obliged to resign it into abler hands ; in spite of the weakness and innumerable absurdities of this professor of Leipsic, he cannot be denied the merit of having freed the German language from that motley and monstrous crowd of foreign words, and particularly French ; of having combated the very vitiated taste which then prevailed in the German poetry ; of having brought forward from among his countrymen many men of great genius, and of having pointed out to them the path of truth.

Nearly at the same time, two distinguished literary champions appeared in Switzerland, Bodmer and Breitinger : the first had fortunately observed the declension of German poetry, and had taken the subject much to heart ; he had scarcely attained the age of twenty, when he conceived the noble project of correcting the *taste* of his country ; an extensive understanding, an ardent genius, a mind possessed of the most profound penetration, and which always tended directly to its object, together with an ardent desire of distinguishing himself, could alone justify him in so bold an enterprize ; and to render it successful, it was necessary for him to possess those uncommon resources which he had acquired very young in his knowledge of the Greek and Latin Poets, and by his constant study of the best critical works of that time in French, English, and Italian literature. He found in his friend Breitinger, a most powerful coadjutor : the latter, though with less genius and taste, possessed a solid and well-grounded erudition, a most correct judgment, and singular sagacity, which calculated before-hand the progress of events.

These two friends began their literary career by a periodical publication, at present forgotten ; but in which they then had the boldness to criticise with severity some German poets, at that time held in almost universal admiration :

the justness of their strictures, seasoned occasionally with witty and pointed sarcasms, excited a very extraordinary sensation.

All were surprised at the boldness with which two strangers from Switzerland dared to attack prejudices so strongly established; and still more astonished at the delusion which so long prevailed in favour of certain miserable scribblers, considered until then as the first poetical models.

The celebrated Gottsched was the first who stood forward to do justice to the courage of our young champions, and to praise them.

But it was scarcely possible, that a friendly understanding could long subsist between Bodmer and Breitinguer. Bodmer, in the empire of letters, like Cæsar in that of the world, could not tolerate a rival; it was a peculiar characteristic of this great man to look with hostile jealousy on every one who aspired to distinction, and was desirous of preserving his independence; it became necessary to acknowledge the sovereignty of his genius to be treated with indulgence. Thus while he could consider himself the patron of the talents of Klopstock and of Wieland, he advanced their reputation with all his power; but when, after their state of pupilage, they wished to enjoy the rights of maturity, he found innumerable faults in their writings. Breitinguer was the only man who, without the most irksome strife, was calculated to share with him the distinguished honour of reforming the German taste. Few authors were ever more exempt from vanity; his ambition was limited to the honour of acting: that of Bodmer was desirous of ruling.

The occasion of the rupture between Bodmer and Gottsched, readily presented itself without being sought for. Bodmer translated the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, and

recommended this poem to the Germans, as one of the grandest models of epic poetry.

These eulogiums much displeased Gottsched; he perceived too well, that after imbibing a taste for the sublime flights of the English Homer, his own very humble poetry would soon become totally insupportable. He composed a Treatise on Poetry, for the use of the Germans; Breitinger composed another, but for the use of all the world; this appeared to Gottsched the summit of presumption.—Breitinger had besides, in this work, criticised Triller, a poet of mediocrity, but an intimate friend of Gottsched; from that moment the storm burst out on every side, the adherents of both parties were many; innumerable pamphlets were published by both; and this literary warfare continued for several years with the greatest animosity.

This contest being at length terminated, like all controversies of this nature, was productive of useful consequences. The various points of view which every discussion of a subject necessarily presents, is well calculated for the developement of truth, and ascertaining it with more precision.

The personal interest which the parties feel, tends, in an eminent degree, to give energy to their activity; in refuting we enlighten and correct; even errors serve to produce new discoveries; and knowledge makes a more rapid progress in a few years, than in whole ages of tranquil and slow improvement. The interest also which such a contest excites, contributes much to diffuse a taste for learning. A thousand spectators, who never had any concern in the subject, earnestly assemble together from curiosity; they are not satisfied with merely looking on, they wish to judge; and to be capable of judging, it is necessary to be informed upon the subject.

Thus every science on which an animated and im-

portant discussion arises, soon becomes the fashionable study ; this kind of fashion has in its turn, a powerful influence on the efforts and talents of those engaged in the contest. Every one seeks to shew himself on that theatre where he flatters himself with hopes of success ; among a crowd of adventurers some attain to mediocrity, some entirely fail ; some, however, succeed, and surprise us by their excellence. Time insensibly removes the dross, and leaves the sterling ore behind.

In the eyes of posterity, this combination of great talents in the same line appears a problem, which they endeavour to solve in various ways, but the most natural is that now stated ; men of genius are at all times to be found, although they do not meet with the same encouragement to bring them forward.

The ferment which the literary warfare of the Swiss against Gottsched excited, was extraordinary ; in reflecting on the agitation which in our time, the appearance of a philosophy so little popular as that of Kant, has caused through all classes of the republic of letters, it is easy to judge of the effect, which must necessarily have been produced by so violent a contest among men already so celebrated, and in a line in which all conceive themselves capable of judging.

The great Frederick himself, however indifferent he always was towards the learning and learned men of Germany, was induced to see the still famous Gottsched, though his estimation was then considerably declining. His majesty during his stay at Leipsic, sent for him, and made him a present of a gold box ; which, as Lessing ill-naturedly observes, was filled with hellebore, instead of ducats.

Germany, about this period, beheld all at once the

golden age of her poets flourish. Klopstock, Ramler, Kleist, Gleim, Utz, Lessing, and Wieland, appeared nearly together, within the small circle of a few years; the poetical enthusiasm was perhaps stronger at Zurich than at any other place. Breitinguer and Bodmer obtained from many of their young fellow citizens a degree of homage little short of idolatry; the latter particularly was revered as the Socrates of his country, as the deity of correct taste. Many men of distinguished genius were found; who, encouraged by these two men, divided among themselves the study of the different branches of philosophy, that of the ancient languages, and that of the German poetry.

The taste for the Belles Lettres extended itself to the fair sex; many ladies distinguished by their natural talents and education, read the best German poets, and read them not solely with a view of enlivening their leisure hours, but for the purpose of forming their taste. The arrival of Klopstock, and his residence at Zurich, caused the enthusiasm to be there carried to the highest degree. This poetical fanaticism nevertheless had none of that intolerance, nor any of the other inconveniences of political or religious fanaticism; it possessed, on the contrary, many advantages; it supported among men of learning an union of co-operation, a more free and open communication, and a more lively interest for the promotion of knowledge.

Such was the disposition of the public mind when Gessner returned to his country. Scarcely had Klopstock quitted Zurich, when the arrival of Wieland soon renovated the poetical delirium of its inhabitants. Gessner extended his connections as much as possible, without taking the least part in their sublime extravagances. His correct and enlightened judgment, his delicate talent for

every species of ridicule, preserved him from this mania; never did any of this madness appear in the circle of his daily acquaintance.

Næf, Steinbrychel, Hirzel, Ulrich, Vœgueli, Schulthess, and many others of his cotemporaries and friends, had enlightened their minds, and formed their taste by the study of the ancients, and by that of the philosophy of Wolf and Baumgarten. In their own pleasant society, they directed the shafts of their severest ridicule against all the absurdities of this artificial sensibility, there was no error of the mind, that met with less indulgence from the satire of their wit.

The first essay by which Gessner was announced was, *The Song of a Swiss under Arms to his Mistress*. This beautiful composition is to be found in a little collection of songs which I have quoted, as belonging to the second period of his poetical talents. It was at first published in a periodical paper, but little known, called Criton, which some friends and pupils of Bodmer published at Zurich in 1751, and in which Bodmer himself took a considerable share. In a letter which precedes this little poem, it is given as a translation; the original of which had been taken from a very ancient collection of anecdotes and songs.

This was a kind of mask under which the author hoped, without trouble, to discover the favourable or unfavourable opinion of the critics and poets; but we have reason to believe, that neither the one nor the other took much notice of it.

The second essay of Gessner which followed the first, at an interval of about a year, made also no great im-

pression ; it was the poem of *Night* : it appeared separately in 1753, without the name of the author.

Although he attached so little value himself to this little piece, that in a letter to his French translator he calls it a caricature, composed in a moment of folly and inebriety, it will always be considered as an essay affording the greatest expectations. We perceive in it throughout the favourite painter of nature ; that novelty of imagery, that freshness of colouring, and that charming and delicate touch which throws a light on the object without dazzling the eye. His prose appears in it already more formed ; it possesses that cadence of sonorous and harmonious periods, which are not more pleasing to the ear, than the agreeable melody of its beautiful verses. But it must be confessed, that in other respects this little poem had, in the form in which it first appeared, some defects ; which the author took care to correct when his judgment became more mature, and his taste more refined.

The ingenious discovery of the origin of the glow-worm, the most agreeable episode of the work, was not in the first edition.

I do not find any proof that this second essay of Gessner's muse, made any greater impression, or had any greater success in Germany, than that crowd of ephemeral pieces which vanish as soon as they appear. At Zurich, the author obtained only the vague and equivocal reputation of a wit.

From accidental reading, he conceived the project of a more extensive poem. He had found in his father's library the translation of Longus, by Amyot ; it suggested to him the idea of composing his *Daphnis*. It is unnecessary to

say to those who are acquainted with the Greek story, that Gessner has borrowed nothing, but simply the idea of a pastoral epic poem.

It was precisely when he was engaged in this little work, that his acquaintance with M. Hirzel, the celebrated author of the *Rustic Socrates* and of several other works, became more intimate; the passion which each had for the belles lettres strengthened the bonds of their friendship, and they often passed whole days together in conversation.

Gessner had submitted a great part of his new poem to the judgment of his friend, when the latter advised him to give a higher colouring to his characters, to put them more frequently in action, and to unite more *moral* in the fable; at this last advice Gessner, shaking his head, began to laugh: "I become moralist! truly it would suit me admirably!" he resolved nevertheless to attempt it.

In general Gessner received favourably every criticism which he thought sincere, and submitted to it willingly. It is to this circumstance we are indebted for the two episodes of *Lamon*, and the *Virtuous Aristo of Crotona*; both are considerable ornaments to the poem. All his other works sufficiently prove how well he profited by the advice of his friend. The amiable purity, the pleasing warmth of virtuous sentiments which animate his poems, are charms which peculiarly distinguish them.

When the poem of *Daphnis* was ready for publication, considerable difficulties remained to be surmounted; the austerity of censorship considered all such love stories, as little conducive to edification; and the introduction of Pagan deities in a work of a Christian poet, appeared ex-

tremely offensive. An ecclesiastical censor protested against the alledged indecency of the motto—

Me juvat in gremio doctæ legisse puellæ.

However strange this may appear at the present day, whoever knows the power of prejudice and the sentiments of those times, will not be surprised at it; it is not much more than forty years ago, that the Copernican system, explained publicly by one of the most enlightened philosophers, Jacob Schenker, was considered as an innovation repugnant to the Holy Scriptures; and the discovery of Swamerdam respecting spermatic animalcules, as an obscene doctrine; could it therefore be reasonably expected, that the publication of a poem, which at that time must have been considered as a very singular phenomenon at Zurich, should escape prohibition? At length, however, *Daphnis* was allowed to be published, but upon these conditions, that neither the author nor place of publication should be named, and that the motto should be struck out: all these conditions are strictly observed in the first edition, which appeared in 1754.

The success of this poem established the reputation of Gessner as a man of genius in the estimation of his fellow-citizens; *Daphnis* and the *Sympathis* of Wieland, were every where seen upon the toilettes of the ladies; and the author was universally called the amiable and tender Gessner.

In 1756 he published *Incle and Yarico*, in the form of a pamphlet, as the second part of a story which Bodmer had published under that title; but he did not insert this little poem in any of the editions of his works published under his own inspection; and it was first republished in a little edition of his works in 1789, a short time after his death.

His *Idyls*, which were published the same year, excited a considerable sensation both in Germany and Switzerland. As the reading of Longus induced him to compose his *Daphnis*, that of Theocritus excited the desire of writing his pastorals, but in both cases he was indebted to his models only for the idea of the species of poem, which suited his talents.

Although Gessner modestly announces his work as a feeble imitation of the Greek poet, it is impossible not to perceive at once the characteristics which distinguish them. He does not, like Virgil, soften that which appears too rude and barbarous for our manners in the *Bucolics* of Theocritus, by a fastidious delicacy, or by an elegance which appears more the result of art than genius; still less does he, like some French poets, adopt a refinement of sentiment incompatible with the simplicity of pastoral life, or a courtly politeness, of which the contrast is still more ridiculous; he opened a path entirely new, and equally distant from the footsteps of his master, and of those who followed him.

The character of the *Idyls* of Gessner, is given in the fifth volume of the *Memoirs* of the Electoral Society of Mannheim; and as his fame is chiefly founded on this species of writing, the following extract is transcribed from it.

“Gessner created a pastoral world for himself; his imagination peopled it with the happiest and most amiable inhabitants of the golden age, beings, the offspring of his genius, in whom was delineated the noble gentleness of his mind; they possessed ideal characteristics above mankind; we scarcely dare apply to his shepherds the appellation of fellow-beings, and the caresses of his shepherdesses seem too pure for our lips.

“ The shepherds of Theocritus possess too much passion, and their affections are too sensual : their innocence is the simplicity of the children of nature ; of that infancy of mankind, which the progress of civilization had not yet either much enlightened or much corrupted. Arch without vice, and subtle without craft, they always interest us, and still continue to attach us to them, even when they oppose the opinions and taste of our more enlightened age.

“ The shepherds of Gessner are of a species superior to ourselves ; they possess the ancient simplicity of the infancy of the world, yet have that delicacy of sentiment which seems to belong only to civilized life, the nobleness of their mind appears innate, not acquired ; the delicacy of their sentiments seems the effect of natural instinct, and the rectitude of their thoughts forms a system of perfect harmony. This new pastoral world is placed in a climate the most happy ; the sky resplendent with the most beautiful colours, its golden sun dazzling with superior brilliancy, and its silver moon diffusing a milder lustre, while its inhabitants appear worthy of so happy an abode ; their love is pure as the air they breathe, their thoughts as untainted as the chrystal waters of the rock ; beneficence appears their only employment, the subjects of their songs are the beauties of nature, the praise of the Deity, filial piety, and all the milder virtues ; the most licentious of their Fauns are more modest than all the Swains of Theocritus.

“ All the shepherds of Gessner, 'tis true, possess nearly the same character ; that of each individual is less marked than those of the Greek poet ; the calm of life they enjoy from the absence of all the violent passions, affords less diversity in the traits of individuals ; the mode of thinking of one is nearly that of all the others, and we seem

almost always to see only the same being under different relations.

“ It would seem as if the result must necessarily be a constant repetition, a monotonous sameness and insipidity ; but how happily does he avoid these faults ! what change of scene ! what variety of situation !—by how many shades of love, of virtue, of pity, of tenderness, does he distinguish and embellish his pictures ! With what native grace can he express in lisping infancy the same sentiment, which in the youth is expressed with more transport, and in the old man with a pleasure more calm and mild ! what an inexhaustible fund of imagery, of various points of view, of expressions simple and affecting ! if the same thought recurs, it is always with a new impression.

“ Whoever has known Gessner as a painter, and has had an opportunity of comparing his best pictures, must have remarked, that in this art also he is never more admirable than when he paints from his own ideas, and composes from the selection of his own imagination ; groves, temples, edifices of the grandest structure, ruins of tombs, rocks and cascades, nymphs bathing, and young satyrs uniting their dances with those of the shepherds, form almost always the subjects of his most beautiful pictures ; all have but one character, and yet the groups are all amply diversified ; all seem animated with the same sentiments, yet one is not a copy of another : whoever possesses the art of imagination to this extent, will, in every age, obtain the applause of his cotemporaries and the admiration of posterity.

“ There is no poet of the sentimental class, who is better skilled in drawing forth the pleasing tears of sensibility, and who is more above all affectation ; no one who more unites delicacy and even softness, with correctness of judgment, and firm and manly wisdom.

“Theocritus and Gessner are both great, both admirable in their modes of writing; but to which of them should be adjudged the prize, must depend on the character of the judge; if Pan be to decide, Theocritus will obtain the lyric crown; but, if Apollo, he will crown Gessner with his choicest garland.”

The first collection of his Idyls contributed not a little to raise the reputation of Gessner; the public opinion considered him from that time as an amiable poet, and placed him soon on an equality with his model; this flattering distinction, however, was not granted without a degree of coldness and reserve, which, compared with the triumphant reception other poets of inferior merit met with in Germany, seems to form a singular contrast: this might, perhaps, in some degree, arise from the political, geographical, and literary relations of the Swiss with the Germans, but still more from the character and disposition of the Germans, who are truly pleased only with works of a strong and energetic character: a poet like Gessner should have readers of the most refined taste, and nicest sensibility.

His own country was not in this respect distinguished from the rest of Germany; his pastorals were thought agreeable and charming, but there were only a few judges who attached to these epithets, now become so common, the idea of something great, new, or original.

His personal character undoubtedly contributed not a little to let his talents remain in the shade; his admirable simplicity, which, in the ordinary intercourse of life, never affected the distinction of an author; his mildness and good-nature, which would never point the arrows of his wit for the purpose of wounding; his deference and respect for merit of every kind, his modest reserve with respect to men of great learning and enlightened minds, all these

qualities together tended at that period, and even at a later, to render him neglected.

His amiable modesty was considered, particularly in a poet, as a consciousness of weakness, and not knowing how to reconcile this modesty with the superiority of his poetical talents, which they could no longer refuse to allow him; they said, he is a poet it is true, but he is nothing more; there were many who even imagined, that Gessner was, by some sport of nature formed only for writing pastorals, as the beaver for building; at length they asserted, that his genius was not only limited to poetry, but even to that particular species in which he excelled.

However remote Gessner was from all ambition, he found himself nevertheless a little hurt at an opinion, which prescribed such confined limits to his genius; and this was truly the circumstance, that gave birth to the first idea of composing the *Death of Abel*. The preface of this poem gives some sufficiently clear hints of this.

Although this poem does not hold the first rank among the productions of his muse, it proves sufficiently that nature had destined him to distinguish himself in more than one species of writing.

This poem has found indeed some very severe judges in England, as well as in Germany. The critic who announced it in the fourth volume of the Library of Arts and Belles Lettres, censures it in a manner that cannot be considered as absolutely without foundation; but these censures, though not altogether false, are yet too severe, and the author gives them an importance exceeding all due bounds of criticism: there are also many objects which he appears to have taken but a partial view of and sometimes even to have seen in a light totally fallacious.

According to him the whole plan of the poem is defective: at the end of the first canto, says he, all the difficulties are removed; Cain is reconciled to his brother, every thing is pacified, the little story is therefore finished. How unjust or precipitate is this judgment! the first paroxysm of Cain's unhappy passion is over, and that is all; does it follow that this passion is eradicated, or that it will not be renewed in a manner more fatal?

It is said, "The second canto presents a narration, which has but a remote connection with the subject:" but have Homer and Virgil no Episodes?

It is objected, "that it is not until the third canto, that the action, and consequently the poem, begins; at the end of the fourth, the weak springs of action, put in motion by the poet, are again stopped; without the formal order of the angel, the burial of Abel would not have belonged to the action." But the burial of Abel is not the only subject of the fifth canto, it occupies only a sixth part of it.

Should it even be admitted, as our critic asserts, that the sentiments of Thirza and of Mahala, the solitary lamentations of Cain, are subjects repeatedly exhausted by the poet, must it not be acknowledged, that these sentiments and these lamentations, are here depicted in a manner entirely new? Does the vague and gloomy despair of Cain, immediately after the perpetration of his crime, present the same sensations as when the mind of this wretched man is described, delivered over to all the feelings of remorse and pity, which oppress and rend it; when hid in the adjacent wood, he hears the wife of his murdered brother lamenting over his tomb, and beseeches her to kill him? Why does this severe critic make no mention in this place of the pathetic scene of this pious family, consenting

with the most generous resignation to follow the wandering destinies of the wretched fugitive, which so well terminates the poem, and which, in another place, he has himself so much praised?

Without undertaking to prove that the plan of the work is free from defects, it is easy to shew it is far from being so replete with faults as some critics would persuade us; and, if the plan alone were to decide the merit of an epic poem, how could Virgil and Klopstock support the rigour of such a criterion of estimation?

It is with the character of Cain that this critic is most dissatisfied; he does not think him sufficiently criminal, and on this account conceives his fratricide without an adequate motive. "How comes it, (says he) that the poet has never thought of preparing us for the Death of Abel, the principal object of the poem, even by a single word? That Abel is to die, is what the reader knows only by the title, he does not learn it from the poet; and Cain himself has no thoughts upon the subject, until the moment when his club falls and crushes the head of Abel: it is almost as if he had by accident precipitated his hero from the top of a mountain." This is what he calls a most happy comparison.

As to the reader not being prepared for the death of Abel by a single word, of what consequence is it, provided the preparation be made by the action of the piece, by the sentiments conveyed, by the whole train of events and circumstances.

The savage, gloomy, and impetuous temper of Cain, always in opposition to the pacific and mild character of Abel, his habitual melancholy, encouraged by the reproaches of his parents and their fondness for his brother, his jealousy excited by the kindness with which Abel saves his

sick father, and the interesting narrative of his recovery, the humiliating grief which afflicts him on seeing his sacrifice rejected, and that of his brother received with distinguished favour; and lastly, the terrible dream with which Anamelech plunges his mind, already afflicted, into despair. Does nothing of all this tend to prepare the mind for the decisive, the fatal blow?

“ Perhaps, (continues the critic,) the poet was afraid of ascribing to Cain the premeditated murder of his brother.” But in that respect the poet has acted judiciously: would he not otherwise have made him a monster who could no longer have interested us, any more than the assassin who, with a poniard in his hand, lurks in wait for the passenger? What then would have become of the action of the poem? Had Cain determined beforehand on the murder of his brother, all the natural or wonderful springs of action which influence him, would then have been useless, or would only have tended to delay, without an object, the moment of the catastrophe; he had nothing more to do but to find out the object of his hatred and to assassinate him.

Upon this supposition there could not exist any epic plan, any interesting difficulty. Upon the principle, on the contrary, on which the poet has conceived and developed this character, the action follows a necessary and natural progression from the beginning to the end.

Although before the approach of the decisive moment, Cain does not appear to have conceived any previous intention of his crime, yet he seems to advance to his destiny with a firm pace; we perceive the gloomy melancholy that preys upon him every moment increase, and his heart replete with vengeance, makes us dread the issue.

Notwithstanding the surprise which the catastrophe excites, it is neither casual nor forced; it is led on as naturally as possible, by the impulse of the last spring of action which the poet employs; it is the sudden explosion of a mine; but it is prepared according to all the known laws of those powers which actuate our sentiments and passions. Upon the whole, it is precisely in this respect that the poet appears to have shewn the most profound knowledge both of the principles of his art, and of the human heart.

The examination of this criticism is stated the more at large, as it was at the time the only criticism of the work; and because it was by this judgment of so celebrated a journalist, rather than by its own intrinsic merit, that the fate of the work in Germany was decided. In France this poem obtained the most distinguished success. Although the Idyls were not then known there, it was sufficient not only to make the author's name known, but also to acquire him celebrity.

The Germans, and even the Swiss, speak of it now only with equivocal reserve. Whence arises this difference? Doubtless, from the public in France, paying no attention to the journalists who affect to give the stamp to criticism; they judge for themselves; and when their judgment is not biassed by passion, or the temporary spirit of party, their decisions are always accurate and just.

But in the eyes of the public in Germany, whose taste is not yet formed, it is as easy to exalt the reputation of a work of mediocrity, as to depress or decry a production of excellence. One is there compelled to acknowledge that as beautiful, which the sworn masters of criticism deign to honour with their approbation, and again to change one's opinion, as soon as they think proper to vary theirs; at the tribunal of such a public, it is often the caprice of a good

critic, or the ignorance of a low censor, that decides for ever on the fate of a work.

In 1762, Gessner published an edition of his works in four volumes, the last of which contained nothing but new productions, except his *Song of the Swiss*, and his *Night*.

These new productions are his *First Navigator*, some Idyls, some new sonnets, and two dramatic pieces, *Evander* and *Erastus*; the last was received with much applause, though it was rather a sketch than a finished piece; it was no less pleasing from its invention, and from its many affecting situations, than from its characters, which were both well conceived and happily expressed, particularly the original character of *Honest Simon*. In all these particulars, the severest critics thought themselves obliged to do him justice; but even the most equitable remarked, that the action was not sufficiently animated, nor the scenes sufficiently attended to.

Evander was treated with much more severity; the plan itself was thought defective; the fable, the characters, their developement were thought too common: yet, notwithstanding the severity of this criticism, which it must be confessed is not altogether without foundation, it must still be acknowledged an excellent production, though deviating considerably from the received rules of dramatic composition.

The *Evander* of Gessner announces evidently a particular intention; the sole object which the poet has in view is, to shew the correctness of natural instinct; the amiable innocence and happy simplicity of pastoral life contrasted with the magnificence of courts, their artificial enjoyments, their fantastical caprices, sometimes ridiculous, sometimes claiming our pity, all which are pro-

duced by the various and complicated relations of our social institutions.

This is the true design to which every thing is directed; and the most beautiful scenes of the piece, are those in which this intention is most strongly marked; whoever is ignorant of this intention, is equally ignorant of the merit of those scenes. With what truth does the author adopt the language of nature! how forcibly does every word from the lips of innocent simplicity, convey the most striking satire! How little and contemptible does all the vain wisdom of men of the world seem, compared to the happy ignorance of these children of nature! What justness of sentiment do all their answers discover! What delightful simplicity in all their questions! 'What do you look for,' says Evander to a young courtesan, who bows before him to the ground, 'are you looking for any thing that you have lost?' Alcimne says to the ladies of the court, who congratulate themselves on being chosen for her service, 'You are very kind, ladies, to have so much friendship for me, whom you have only seen this moment for the first time.'

These scenes are full of such traits. There is no irony more refined, than that which good sense dictates to ingenuous simplicity, to expose folly to laughter; and the fool is never more ridiculous than when he laughs himself at the shaft that strikes him.

Gessner composed his *First Navigator* in the country, in one of the most charming scenes in the vicinity of Zurich; a small lake was contiguous to his residence, at the margin of its tranquil waters, he used to sit whole hours in pleasing and profound meditation, and it was probably there he first conceived the idea of this delightful poem.

The most general opinion has ascribed to the poem of

the *First Navigator*, one of the most distinguished places among the productions of Gessner's muse. The severe critic who has been already quoted, could not refuse it his admiration; and Gessner himself has always shewn for this work a peculiar predilection; nothing can be more perfect; the ground-work of it shews a **most** enlightened taste; nothing can be more natural than the plan, nothing more happy than its execution; the characters are well drawn, and that of *Melide* is particularly distinguished for its charming simplicity.

After the volume which has just been mentioned, Gessner suffered many years to elapse without recalling himself to public notice; his taste for drawing and engraving, which he had by turns quitted and resumed, became during this period his favourite passion; it seemed to possess the entire dominion over him, and to have withdrawn him for ever from poetry. It was not until the year 1772, that the 2d volume of his *Idyls* appeared with his *Letter on Landscape*. These new Idyls, besides the poetical merit they possess in common with the former, are also particularly interesting, as they describe the domestic felicity of the author, and some circumstances relative to his life; of this number is the *Autumnal Morning*. 'O! this morning,' said he, with the most lively emotion to the Abbé Bertola, 'this wife, these children, behold them here: it is for us I have drawn this picture; it is my family that inspired me, I have painted their happiness and my own.'

Another Idyl, *Daphnis* and *Chloe*, was composed at a time when he had recovered from a severe illness; two children are there described coming to implore the god Pan in behalf of their sick father. One goes to sacrifice to the god his little bird, the other his dove; when a voice is heard, which says, "Amiable children, do not sacrifice that which affords you delight, your father is restored to life." The purest sentiments of innocence and filial piety

breathe in every feature of this admirable pastoral; it is the most beautiful hymn, the most worthy incense a sage can offer to the Deity.

It is due to our readers, to give a more detailed account of the reception the writings of Gessner met with in France; it is the most important part of the history of his fame. Writers for the most part do not acquire celebrity in foreign countries, until they have for some time attracted the attention of their own; Gessner experienced the contrary; he was not, it is true, entirely unknown to his countrymen; but he did not enjoy among them nearly that esteem which he merited: in many respects his genius was even unknown, until the splendour of his fame was of a sudden diffused from the capital of France, over his own country and all Europe.

His good fortune prepared this success by a happy combination of many favourable circumstances; the French nation had not long before receded from the very unfavourable opinion it had always entertained of the genius and taste of the Germans, the names of Haller, of Hagedorn, of Klopstock, of Kleist and Geller, began to be known and esteemed.

At Paris the study of the German language had become fashionable among people of rank. M. Huber, a German by birth, had lately fixed his residence there, and taught that language to several ladies of the court, and some men of the first distinction. He was a man replete with knowledge and taste, and connected with Rousseau, Diderot, Grimm, and other men of the most extensive learning; and it seemed as if he had been destined to make the name of Gessner first known in France.

M. Huber first translated the Death of Abel, which he was induced to do, from accidentally meeting with a copy

of it at the house of his countrymen M. Wille ; to whom M. Fuesli, the author of "*The History of the best Artists of Switzerland*," had sent it. He often submitted the translation to the judgment of his enlightened friends ; and when it was finished, Toussaint corrected it ; but still it was not without much trouble, that the printer, Hardy, was prevailed on to publish it ; he promised himself no advantage from a poem that came from Switzerland ; a thousand little difficulties that arose between the translator and him, retarded for a long time the publication.

At length the book appeared : it abounded with typographical errors : M. Huber requested, that an *errata* at least might be added, but he could not obtain it. Hardy calculated with such certainty on his loss by it, that he even refused this small expense, which M. Huber thought necessary to secure the sale of the edition ; but the event proved how little foundation there was for those fears. In spite of all the errors with which this edition was replete, the sale was so rapid, that at the end of a fortnight it was found necessary to print a second, and before the end of the year, a third. M. Hardy was completely indemnified for all the anxiety he had suffered, from his unfavourable opinion of German genius.

Huber writes in a letter to Gessner, dated in July 1760 " My Editor has gained several hundred louis by the *Death of Abel* ; yet he persists in believing, that good fortune alone has caused the success of the book "

Soon after the *Death of Abel, Inle and Yarico* was published ; this little poem had also found a fit translator in M. Riviere, secretary to the Saxon embassy.

Encouraged by this first success, M. Huber undertook the translation of the first Idyls ; he had the uncommon good fortune of finding some men of the most correct

taste, and the most refined sensibility, who assisted him in making the translation approximate as much as possible to the perfection of the original.

The celebrated M. Turgot had a considerable share in this translation ; and Diderot, then the zealous admirer of Gessner, contributed not a little to its perfection.

M. Huber was under no difficulty in finding a publisher for the *Idyls* ; the name of Gessner, since his *Death of Abel* had been read in France, became the best recommendation for all his other works. The eagerness for publishing them was equalled by the desire of bringing them forward with all the elegance of typographical embellishment, which then began to be cultivated.

M. Wattelet, who is celebrated both as a poet and an artist, ornamented this edition with beautiful vignettes ; it was published in 1762, at Lyons.

The success answered completely the expectation that had been formed of it ; all the journals gave the highest eulogiums to the author. The *Idyls* were soon in the hands of every body, every one spoke of them, and no one could conceive that a German could possess so much elegance and delicacy. He is still more extraordinary, said some, he is even a Swiss ; but Diderot, Grimm, and others, maintained that he was a Grecian: 'Tis the Grecian genius, said they, 'tis the delicacy and simplicity of that genius, grafted on the elegance of our modern manners and modern philosophy. Rousseau was delighted with him ; he wrote to M. Huber, from his retirement at Montmorency : " Your Gessner is a man after my own heart ; I was in a fit of the most cruel of disorders, when I received your letter, and your *Idyls* ; after reading your letter, I mechanically opened the book, thinking I should shut it again

immediately ; but I did not shut it until I read it through, and I did not lay it by until I had read it over again."

The Duchess de Choiseul, at that time all-powerful, invited Gessner to come and fix his residence at Paris, but he excused himself on account of the sacred ties which bound him to his country.

M. Huber also published a translation of the *First Navigator*, and of *Daphnis*, in the year 1764. M. Wattelet contributed much to the perfection of this work, not only by his corrections, but also by several beautiful engravings, and taking the charge of having it published with the greatest typographical elegance.

Several persons, at the same time, translated Evander and Erastus ; Erastus was also translated by M. Huber, and Evander by M. Riviere.

But his *New Idyls* were the most fortunate of all ; they were translated by M. Meister, a fellow-citizen of the author, who has since been distinguished by several works of genius, and a man of the most accurate intellect and the purest taste : a residence at Paris for many years, in habits of strict intimacy with men of literature, had given him a perfect knowledge of the French language, with all its refinements ; and no one was better qualified to comprehend the true character of Gessner's poetry, or to express its graces with more elegance.

On this occasion Diderot was pleased to give a striking proof of his friendship and esteem for Gessner ; he proposed to him, in the kindest manner, to publish, at the end of these *Idyls*, two stories that he had just written, adding, that it would give him pleasure to see his writings bound in the same volume with Gessner's ; this proposal was very

kindly received, and the Idyls and Stories were published together in 1772.

After this period, and even before Gessner possessed in France the reputation of a classic author, his writings were constantly translated, imitated, and got by heart; and the French seemed as much to admire his poems, as the Greeks did those of Homer. In 1774, a free translation of the Death of Abel, in blank verse, was published.

Among the translators of the Idyls, the names of Blin, of Sainmore, of Cubières, of Leonard, of Berquin, of François de Neufchateau, and others, are distinguished.

Many dramatic pieces have been taken from the writings of Gessner. The following are a few of the principal :

The Death of Abel was at the same time represented in Paris at two theatres. M. Le Grouvé has also very happily composed this subject in three acts. Diderot has corrected the little dramatic piece of Erastus, according to his own plan. M. Marmontel has also taken from it the idea of his *Sylvain*, the charming music of which is, perhaps, the *chef-d'œuvre* of Gretry; this piece had very great success, and probably gave rise to several other imitations which followed it.

The *First Navigator* furnished Fenouillot de Failbaire, the author of the *Innocent Criminal*, with the subject of a grand opera, set to music by Phillidor. Gardel has composed from it a Ballet, with which all Paris was delighted.

The numerous editions of the works of Gessner, published in France, would form a long catalogue; perhaps in

this respect he is surpassed by no modern poet; and next to France it is in England and in Italy that his works have been most frequently re-printed.

Hitherto, in this account of Gessner, he has been considered merely as a poet; it may perhaps, be thought necessary by some, to describe him as an artist; but as he has himself thrown a considerable degree of light upon this part of the subject, in his letter to the painter Fuesli, very little remains to be added here on that point.

Gessner had attained the age of thirty before he thought of devoting himself seriously to painting; till then his essays in drawing and engraving were only an amusement. To induce him to exertion, it was always necessary to rouse him from his habitual carelessness, by presenting to his mind a strong motive, which, having once found, there was no degree of application, however severe, that he was not adequate to, and no obstacles that his assiduity could not surmount.

He at this period formed an acquaintance with M. Heidegger, who possessed a valuable collection of pictures, prints, and drawings; he had free access to his house and his collection; he formed an intimate friendship with his son, and soon conceived a strong attachment for his daughter.

The daughter of Heidegger was a young lady endowed with uncommon accomplishments of mind and person; the parents of both, however, were not well pleased with their mutual attachment; but this disinclination arose solely from prudential motives, the parents of each having conceived, from the great merits of their children, hopes of a more eligible marriage, in point of fortune: Gessner, however, at length surmounted this opposition, and married her.

Here a new situation presented itself to his view, and he justly concluded it was a duty incumbent upon him to prepare for those expences which a family necessarily required, without being dependent on his parents for support. He did not think he could rely on his pen, as affording means sufficiently certain for this purpose. Had he lived in France, or in England, the numerous editions of his works, in both countries, would have insured him an adequate resource; but in his own country it could not be expected; he, therefore, resolved to have recourse to those arts, which, hitherto, he had cultivated for amusement, and to make them the subject of his serious employment.

He entered upon his new pursuit with an application truly astonishing, and in a short time made a rapid progress; he soon distinguished himself by his engravings, and some of his pictures obtained the approbation of the best judges: he still, however, continued to practise drawing with all the application of a young scholar. It is only the inexperience of youth, or the folly of indolence, that can imagine that in any art or science, genius can dispense with labour; it is only by their united efforts that any great degree of excellence can ever be obtained.

In comparing the first essays of Gessner, in engraving with his last, and his first pictures with those capital works which he composed towards the latter part of his life, the difference appears astonishing.

Some observations on the particular genius and manners of Gessner, confirmed by the testimony of his most intimate friends, will conclude this account.

The ideas of Gessner were not deficient either in clearness or extent. His judgment always tended directly to its object with uncommon precision. He easily comprehended an object in all its relations; the most delicate

shades or discrimination never escaped his observation; but his mind had more penetration than extent, was more remarkable for flights of fancy than vivacity.

He did not always express his ideas with facility, and to be intelligible, he was often obliged to arrange them in a kind of systematic order. He was extremely diffident of the correctness of his own judgment, but his natural sagacity almost uniformly led him to the most correct conclusions.

It was this extreme diffidence that rendered him unfit for the management of public affairs. He entirely wanted that self-confidence, which they indispensibly require, and that promptitude in the investigation of complicated matters, and in deciding upon them immediately, which is often necessary.

His silence in the public councils of his canton, has sometimes been considered as an indication of his indifference for the interests of his country, and sometimes as a proof of his want of capacity; but both causes are equally unjustly assigned. No man felt a more lively interest in the concerns of his country, than Gessner; and when he was particularly called upon, and had time to arrange and consider the subject, no man discussed it with more clearness and correctness, so that all were astonished, that a man, who could speak so well, was heard so seldom.

He never spoke merely for the purpose of being heard; and his writings fully prove, that no man could think with more solidity and correctness. This is sufficiently evinced by his *Letter on Landscape*, his *Preface to the Death of Abel*, and to the *Idyls*. There is not one of his immortal poem that does not attest the elegance and purity of his taste, and the extreme delicacy of his manner of thinking.

There are but few writers of any age, so conspicuous for moral as well as logical accuracy. The elegance of his poetic language, and the enchanting harmony of his prose, are perhaps unexampled. Few of his cotemporaries have, like him, continued to support the reputation they acquired; all of them bear the stamp and character of the age in which they wrote. The progress of the German language has been so rapid, that those writings, which then were generally considered as classical, are now deemed unworthy of being read: the stile is obsolete, the idioms trite and vulgar; but the language of Gessner is still as fresh and new as ever; like Apollo and Bacchus, he seems to enjoy perpetual youth. Other writers have followed the age in which they lived: Gessner has advanced before it.

In the strict sense of the word, Gessner had no pretensions to *learning*; he was satisfied with that degree of erudition, without which it was impossible to become a classic writer. His principal knowledge was relative to painting and poetry.

He had in his youth, with incessant application, studied the English Spectator, and the voluminous writings of Bodmer and Breitinguer. In general, he was desirous of reading all the valuable works of criticism that he could get.

He read some of the Latin poets in the original, and others in the French translation: as to the Greek poets, he read them chiefly in the Latin translation; Homer he read in the German translation of Damm; he set but little value on the other translators: 'These gentlemen,' said he, 'either by design, or unintentionally, overcharge the pictures of Homer with their own colouring, which I would gladly dispense with. That which Homer says with a manly simplicity is translated by Damm with a sir

plicity merely puerile, but still with fidelity ; and, in spite of the imperfect stile, I understand it, and think I discover in it the meaning of the Ionian bard better than in the most laboured translations.'

He was particularly fond of Don Quixotte, generally read it once a year, and was never tired of it.

The great basis of his moral character, was an uncommon goodness of heart ; a cheerful, serene, and contented disposition ; pleased in all the different situations of life, he enjoyed all the happiness he could possess ; felt a sincere pleasure in the welfare of others, and always rejoiced in being able to contribute to it. He encouraged, with pleasure, the first efforts of genius ; directed them by his advice, and supported them with all his influence.

In his youth his taste in the choice of society, was extremely select ; he lived only for himself and the Muses, and neither sought nor liked any company but that of men of learning and talents, and of women of pleasing and cultivated manners.

In society he was a man of the most mild and accommodating disposition ; he never suffered an offensive word to escape him ; on the contrary, he saw and represented every thing in the most favourable view.

We can easily conceive that his great reputation necessarily attracted a crowd of visitors, who became extremely troublesome to a man so very much employed. Gessner sought for no homage, nor did he pride himself on disdaining it. His behaviour was equally open and unreserved to the most exalted nobleman ; and to none more than to the man of merit. A single visit from one of this last class, would compensate him frequently for the impertinent intrusions of twenty travellers of curiosity, who used

to come to rob him of a precious hour, merely to tell him they were not ignorant of him.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that a man of his character joined to his other qualities, that modesty which is almost inseparable from true greatness; Gessner possessed it in an extraordinary degree. One who did not know him, might pass whole weeks or months with him, without supposing him to be an author, still less an author cried up by all the great, read and admired by all nations. He very seldom, indeed scarcely ever, spoke of his own writings, not even when a fair opportunity presented itself; his reserve on this subject was so great, that some of his most intimate acquaintance never once heard him mention it.

Gessner was, while he lived, the centre, round which all the men of intellect, of taste, and of knowledge, all the friends of reason and of virtue in Zurich, moved. He devoted two evenings in the week to their society, in which his house was open for their reception, and frequented by all the magistrates, the men of science, and artists. During the latter years of his life, he resided in summer in a simple and convenient house, in the middle of the forest of Sihlwald, of which he was inspector. This habitation is situated in a little romantic valley, through which the Sihl flows, the rocky precipices of the surrounding hills, and the lofty pines that adorn their summits, give a pleasing variety to the scene. There his intimate friends visited him, and spent in his society days of tranquillity and happiness.

His country loved and honoured him as one of her worthiest citizens; and although he never courted political honours, yet he no sooner attained the age prescribed by law, than he was elected a member of the lesser-council. After his death some of his fellow citizens erected a monu-

ment to his memory, in the most beautiful of the public walks, at the confluence of the Sihl and the Limmat.

An apoplectic stroke terminated, without pain, a life that glided on like a gentle rivulet, along a valley enamelled with flowers. He died the 2d of March, 1787, aged fifty-seven, lamented by his wife, his three children, and his sister who survived him. His daughter married M. Zellweguer, one of the principal merchants of Switzerland; his youngest son married the daughter of the celebrated Wieland, the early friend of his father; the eldest son seems to have inherited his father's talent for painting, and all his children have equally inherited his noble sentiments and his goodness of heart, the most conspicuous traits of his moral character.

INTRODUCTION.

THE two brothers, Cain and Abel, were by nature united in the bonds of strictest friendship. The whole earth was before them, and was, in fact, their exclusive property. Cain, however, became the murderer of his brother Abel. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." And, "in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord; and Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock." The offering of Abel was acceptable to God, while that of the other was displeasing to him; for, says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "By *faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." The fact was, Abel, as a penitent sinner, gladly signified his faith in the promised Saviour by a bloody sacrifice, knowing, that without shedding of blood there could be no remission; while Cain, proud and pharisaical, merely brings a thank-offering to God, implying no humiliation for sin, nor desire of mercy. Cain instantly perceived the difference which had been made between him and his brother, "was very wroth, and his countenance fell." Hereupon God condescended to expostulate with him, giving him to understand, it was his own fault that his sacrifice was not pleasing. "If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?" Yet this paternal reproof made no impression on the obdurate heart of Cain: and Moses thus simply relates this tragical scene;—"it came to pass when they were in the field, Cain *rose against his brother and slew him.*"—God demanded of Cain, where his brother Abel was? And instead of throwing himself on the mercy of his Judge, he adds falsehood to insolence, and said, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?"

How dreadful is the progress of vice! How crime leads on to crime! Envy begets malice; malice inspires revenge: revenge hurries on to blood; blood-guiltiness seeks shelter under untruth; and untruth attempts to support itself by insolence, assurance, and pride; and haughtiness of spirit is but one step from destruction. "The Lord said unto Cain, what hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. Now art thou cursed from the earth which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be on the earth." Murder is an offence of the deepest die; as it not only strikes at the root of all human society, but is also a direct attack upon the Almighty Sovereign. For he who aims to destroy "the image of God," would not hesitate to destroy the great Archetype himself. Accordingly it is obvious, that the murderer is punished with peculiar vengeance in this life, and is marked out beyond all other transgressors as an object of divine indignation.

THE QUEEN.

PERMIT me to lay at the foot of Your Throne this Volume, which is an attempt to translate from Your Native Language a work deservedly admired. I am sensible it is but a faint representation of the glowing beauties of the excellent original: yet I flatter myself I have, in some measure, preserved the ideas, especially those which fill and warm the heart with the love of virtue. On this account, and on this only, I presume to hope for Your Majesty's favourable acceptance of this work.

Placed by the hand of Providence at an humble distance from the Great, my cares and pleasures are concentrated within the narrow limits of my little family, and it is in order to contribute to the support and education of my children, I have taken up the pen. Your Majesty's patronage will undoubtedly insure my success: but I am far from hoping that You, Madam, will give Your Royal Sanction to a performance that has no other merit to plead than the ill-judged though affectionate industry of a fond mother. If I have attempted a task for which nature never designed me, it is just that disappointment should teach me humility and wisdom, and I bow, without repining, to the stroke.

May you, Madam, ever feel the delight of giving joy to a brave and loyal people! May your exemplary virtues, united with

those of our beloved Sovereign, put wickedness to shame, and force vice to hide its head ! May all ranks, influenced by Royal Precedent, and the manners of Your Court, grow ashamed of licentiousness, inhumanity, profaneness, and dissipation. May the sincere gratitude and love of a reformed, united, and happy people, render valuable the splendour of your public station. While domestic peace, conjugal felicity, and maternal love, fill with tranquil delight your more retired hours. May you see, with transport, the rising virtues of a numerous progeny : May You, Madam, to use the patriarchal language of my Author—May you, full of days, and full of glory, after having beheld Your Children's Children flourish round You, late, very late, resign an earthly crown, to receive an everlasting diadem in the realms of bliss and immortality. These are the ardent wishes of

MADAM,

Your's and his Majesty's

Most dutiful, most devoted,

And most obedient,

Subject and Servant,

MARY COLLYER.

THE
DEATH OF ABEL.

——Paullo majora cecamus.
Non omnes arbusta juvant humiles myricæ.
Virg. Eccl. IV.

BOOK I.

Introduction—Abel and Thirza—Abel's Morning Hymn—Adam and Eve—
Mehala—Cain's Soliloquy—Conversation in the Bower—Adam expos-
tulates with Cain—Anguish of Adam—Cain's Repentance—His Reconcilia-
tion with his Brother—Mehala and Thirza prepare a Repast in the Bower.

I now aspire to sing a lofty strain, the situation
of our first parents after their lamentable fall, and
him who, sacrificed by his brother's fury, first min-
gled his dust with the parent earth. Repose now,
soft rustic pipe, with which I once chaunted the
amiable manners and the simplicity of rural life.
Assist me, O Muse, who inspirest the poet's soul,
when musing in the tranquil solitude of the mid-
night hour, either in the mild radiance of the moon,
in the obscurity of the grove, or on the shadowed
banks of the sequestered stream. When holy
transport fills his soul, his fervid imagination
soars aloft, and undaunted speeds its flight

Invocation.

through created nature to the remoter regions of possibility, where it collects rich stores of the marvellous and the beautiful. With these treasures it returns to rear the motley structure, while cautious reason, asserting her mild dominion, assumes the inspection over the work, approves, rejects, and seeks harmonious combinations. How swiftly fly the golden hours of sublime enjoyment devoted to the delightful occupation. He is abundantly compensated for watching amidst the cricket's music till the rising of the morning star, who obtains the love and esteem of those whose refined taste is delighted with all that is beautiful, and who excites in hearts endowed with sensibility sentiments of virtue. Succeeding generations justly revere the poet's urn embraced by the aged ivy, whom the Muses themselves inspired to teach the world innocence and virtue. His fame survives with undiminished lustre, when the trophies of the conqueror are mouldered into dust; when the splendid mausoleum of the inglorious monarch is scattered amidst the wild bushes of the desert, and its moss-covered ruins serve only to afford an occasional resting-place to the way-lost wanderer. The celebrity nature has indeed granted to very few; to emulate them is a laudable attempt. To this object be my solitary walks and all my lonely hours devoted.

The silent hours led on the rosy morning, and besprinkled the shadow earth with dew; the sun,

Abel and Thirza.

darting his first beams behind the black cedars of the mountain, gilded with glowing tints the clouds that floated through the dawning heavens, when Abel and his beloved Thirza quitted their habitation, and repaired to a neighbouring bower of jessamine and roses; love and innocence beamed from the blue eyes of Thirza, irresistible charms played upon her blooming cheeks, and her light tresses, flowing over her youthful bosom and falling down her back, entwined her slender waist. It was thus she walked by Abel's side. His brown locks thickly shadowed his elevated brow, and played about his shoulders; contemplative dignity was mingled with the sweetness of his countenance; decked with manly beauty he appeared like an angel who is sent by the Lord to sooth the last moments of the expiring sinner, or to convey a joyful answer to the prayer of the solitary saint; though enveloped in the veil of mortality, yet the exquisite beauty which beams through it proclaims him an inhabitant of heaven. Thirza looked at him with a tender smile, and said, "My beloved, now, when the birds hail the return of morn, sing, I entreat thee, the hymn thou yesterday composedst in the mead. What is more delightful than to praise the Lord? When thou singest my heart expands with holy transports, while thou givest utterance to the sensations which I can only feel, but am incapable of expressing." Abel, embracing her, replied,

“ Every request of thy dear lips shall be obeyed, my Thirza ! every wish I read in thine eyes shall be gratified. We will seat ourselves here on the soft moss, and I will then sing the hymn.” They seated themselves beside each other in the fragrant bower, whose entrance was gilded by the morning sun, and Abel thus began :—

“ Retire, O sleep, from every eye ; disperse, ye hovering dreams ! reason returns to illuminate the soul as the landscape is illuminated by the morning sun. Hail lovely sun, behind the cedars ! by thee all nature is decked with renovated splendour. Retire, O sleep, from every eye ! retire, ye hovering-dreams, to the shades of night. Where are they, the shades of night ? They have fled to the recesses of the grove and the caverns of the rocks, and await us there, or in the umbrageous bower, to yield us refreshing coolness amidst the sultry heat of noon. There, where the early morning beams awake the eagle, what exhalations, arising from the glistening summits of the rocks and the mountain's brow, ascend into the pure atmosphere, like the incense of burnt-offerings from the altar ! It is Nature which thus celebrates the return of morn, and offers up her thanks to the Lord of the creation !

To him shall praise ascend from every creature, to him, the maker and preserver of all things. To praise him the opening flowers diffuse their early odours ; to him innumerable tribes of feathered

Abel's Morning Song.

songsters, aloft in the air, or from the branches of the trees, pour forth their grateful melody. To praise him the lion quits his den, and the deserts resound the tremendous roar in which he expresses his delight ; praise him, O my soul ! praise him, O my soul ! praise the Lord, the Creator, and Preserver ; but chief, let the thanksgiving of man ascend to thee, let him praise thee while every other creature yet slumbers, ere yet the accents of the feathered warbler are heard from the lofty branches, or from the waving spray. Let my lonely voice be heard in the twilight, and awaken every creature to join in his praise. Excellent and lovely is the creation in which he has displayed to us, unworthy sinners, his wisdom and his goodness. All my senses drink delight at this inexhaustible ocean of beauty, and convey it to my ravished soul. How can we utter thy praises, O Almighty Being ? Was it not infinite goodness that prompted thee to quit the sacred silence which reigned around thy eternal throne, to call forth creation from nothing, and this immeasurable fabric of the world from the bosom of night ? When, at his nod, the sun goes forth to chase the shades of night, when Nature shines, the renovated beauty, and every slumbering animal wakes to pay its tribute of gratitude ; art thou not, dewy morning, an image of the creation, a picture of that morn when the Creator hovered over the new-formed earth ? Profound silence pervaded the

Abel's Morning Song.

uninhabited expanse. At the voice of the Almighty myriads of beings, infinitely varied in form and beauty, fluttered on variegated wings, soared aloft in the air, and sported in the flowery meadows, among the bushes, or in the shady branches ; their warblings resounded through the astonished groves, and the air rung with the praises of the Creator.—He again spoke, and called forth into existence all the animals which people the surface of the earth. At his command the shapeless clod assumed innumerable forms, the horse bounds over the turf from which he sprung, and, neighing, shakes his flowing mane ; the majestic lion, scarcely disengaged from the cumbrous mass, endeavours, for the first time, to raise his terrific voice ; a hill heaves with life, and the unwieldy elephant stalks forth. Thus were innumerable voices at once employed in the praise of the Creator. Thus thou each morning callest thy creatures from the impotence of sleep ; they awake, they behold around them the richness of thy bounties, and join in the general chorus of praise.—The time will come when the whole earth shall be peopled with men ; then, O then, shall thy sacred altars blaze on every hill ; from every grove and every mead shall thanks and praises ascend to thee, when the morning sun awakes the nations scattered over the surface of the earth.”

Thus sung Abel by the side of his beloved, who still sat listening with devout attention : then

throwing her snowy arm around his neck, she gazed on him with tenderness, and said, "O my beloved, with what sublime devotion is my soul filled by thy strains! Thy affectionate care not only protects my feebler frame, but my soul is elevated under thy direction. When it has lost its way, and seeks naught around but obscurity, and sinks down in holy astonishment, thou raisest it up, dispellest the gloom, and changest silent surprise into profound adoration. Ah! how often in truth, in every solitary moment—I return thanks to the eternal goodness with tears and joys, for having created us for each other, for that perfect unison in all the thoughts of our souls, in all the wishes of our hearts."

As she spoke the tenderest and purest love gave inexpressible sweetness to every tone of her voice, and to every gesture. Abel answered not, but the affection with which he gazed on her, the fervour with which he pressed her to his bosom, spoke his sensations better than any words could have expressed them. Ah! how happy was man, when enjoying content he required nothing of the earth but the fruits which it willingly yielded, when he asked nothing of Heaven but virtue and health; before his dissatisfaction created insatiable wishes, invented innumerable wants, and buried his happiness beneath splendid misery. What more did mankind then require to unite themselves in the tenderest ties than love and virtue? No virtuous

pair formed by heaven for each other then consumed their days in hopeless affliction, because penury and wretchedness threatened to embitter their future lives, or because their passion was thwarted by parental pride and tyrannical ambition.

They were still seated, when Adam and Eve approached; they had overheard the morning song, and the conversation of Abel and Thirza, and they now entered the bower and embraced their children, whose happiness and virtue filled them with the sincerest joy that ever smiled on the cheeks of affectionate parents. Mehala, the wife of Cain, had likewise entered the bower! Cain's harsh and impetuous disposition had imprinted sadness on her brow, and diffused a soft melancholy in her black eyes; paleness overspread her cheeks, around which waved her dark tresses. When Thirza embraced her beloved, and expressed her transport at being created for him, Mehala, who witnessed their endearments without the bower, was unable to refrain from weeping; but drying her tears she entered the arbour with a friendly smile, and saluted her brother and sister with tender affection. Cain, who at this moment was passing by the bower, had likewise heard Abel's song, and seen with what transports his parents embraced him. "What raptures!" said he, fixing his indignant looks on the bower, "what embraces only because he has sung a song. He may

Cain's Envy.

well sing and compose hymns, as he must otherwise pass his time in sleep, when idly reclining by his flock in the shade. The sun scorches me at my rugged toil ; I have neither leisure nor inclination for singing. When I have performed the labours of the day my weary limbs require repose, and morning awakes me to new exertion. But that soft indolent youth, who would soon sink beneath the oppressive weight of my toils, they every where pursue with tears of joy, and their tender embraces. I hate such effeminate tenderness ; but me they teaze not with their caresses, though condemned during the live-long day to till the unwilling soil. How they flow—those tears of joy !”

Thus saying, he passed by to his field. They had overheard his words in the bower. Mehala, paler than before, sank on Thirza's shoulder and wept ; Eve, sorrowfully reclining on her husband, likewise wept over her first-born. “ My beloved parent,” said Abel, “ I will follow my brother to the field ; I will embrace him ; I will say every thing that fraternal love can suggest. I will embrace him, and he shall not leave my arms till he promises to banish all resentment from his bosom, till he promises to love me. Ah, I have examined my whole heart and soul, to discover how I may gain my brother's affection ; often have I penetrated, and anew enkindled his expiring love ; but, alas ! the gloom and envy of discontent as often returns and extinguishes the flame.”

“My beloved Abel,” replied his sorrowful father, “I will myself go to him, I will say every thing that paternal affection and reason can urge. O Cain! Cain! with what gloomy anxiety dost thou fill my heart. It is impossible that the passions can rage with such tremendous violence in the bosom of the sinner, and extinguish every spark of virtue and affection! Wretch that I am, what dark forebodings terrify my soul, when I look forward and contemplate the miseries of my descendants. O sin! sin! what dreadful ravages thou committest in the human soul.” Thus spoke Adam, and in pensive melancholy left the bower, and repaired to the field of the first-born.—Cain, perceiving him approaching, desisted from his labour, and thus addressed him:—“Why that sternness in my father’s looks? It was not with such a countenance thou embracedst my brother. I read reproaches in thine eyes.”

Adam, in accents of mingled sorrow and tenderness, replied, “Be saluted my first-born. The consciousness of having deserved reproach causes thee to discover displeasure in my eyes. Yes, Cain, thou deservest reproaches. The grief, the anguish, thou hast implanted in thy father’s breast bring me hither.”

“Not affection,” answered Cain, “that belongs only to Abel.”

“Yes, Cain, affection,” replied Adam; “heaven is my witness that it was likewise affection. These tears, this grief, this incessant anxiety, which tor-

Conversation between Adam and Cain.

ments me, and her who with pain gave thee birth, these melancholy days and restless nights—what are they but the effect of the most tender love ; O Cain ! Cain ! if thou lovedst us, it would be the object of thy dutiful solicitude to dry the tears of anguish from our cheeks, to dispel the gloomy melancholy which embitters our lives. O ! if yet thy heart retains any reverence for that Being who sees into the inmost recesses of thy soul, if a spark of filial love yet glows in thy bosom, by that love I implore thee to restore to us our lost tranquillity, our extinguished joys ! Cherish no longer in thy soul this obduracy, this gloomy resentment, against him whose affectionate heart is earnestly desirous to eradicate this noxious weed from thy bosom. O Cain, is it possible that our tears of joy, that the rapture which the exalted purity of his piety and his virtue excite within us, should have filled thy soul with rage and indignation. The angels who hover around us behold with ecstasy every virtuous action ; the Almighty himself looks down from his throne upon them with gracious approbation. Wouldst thou change the nature of thy beauty and virtue ? It is not in our power, or if it were, could we resolve, O Cain, to resist those soft, those rapturous emotions, and those sublime pleasures with which they fill the soul ? The rolling thunder, or the horrors of the midnight tempest, call forth no smile upon the cheek ; nor can the violence and

Adam expostulates with Cain.

the tumult of ungovernable passions produce pleasure in the human breast."

Cain answered, "Am I then doomed to hear nothing but these bitter reproaches? If I cannot dress my face in smiles, nor bid the tears of tenderness to overflow my eyes, shall my more manly firmness be branded with the most odious vices? Bolder enterprises and severer toils have ever been my choice; that sternness which nature has imprinted on my brow I cannot convert into soft smiles and tears. Can the eagle coo like the harmless dove!"

Adam, with majestic gravity, replied, "Wilt thou deceive thyself? Wilt thou carefully conceal from thy observation those baneful passions thou oughtest to subdue? O Cain, it is not manly firmness that is imprinted on thy brow, thy countenance and thy whole deportment bespeak envy and discontent; these have spread around thee dreary obscurity. Hence this murmuring at thy labour, this unkind behaviour to us all, and this inquietude. Could we, O could we, banish the melancholy gloom, could we inspire thee with happiness serene as the vernal morn, then would our most ardent wish be gratified. But, Cain, what cause hast thou for uneasiness? Are not all the sources of felicity open to thee? Doth not Nature offer thee all her charms? Is not every happiness, every pleasure, which nature, reason, and virtue bestow on us, likewise presented to thee?

Adam expostulates with Cain.

But thou leavest those blessings untasted, unenjoyed, and complainest of misery. Or art thou dissatisfied with that portion of happiness which it has pleased the eternal goodness to confer on fallen sinners? Dost thou envy the lost angels? Know, that discontent could enter even the bosom of angels; they aspired to become gods, and forfeited heaven. Dost thou arraign the decrees of the Creator, who with infinite wisdom presides over the destiny of his sinful creatures?—While all created beings join in his praise, shall a mortal, a worm, raise his head from the dust, and presume to murmur against Him, whose nod governs the heavens; whose Almighty goodness is attested by universal nature; whose all-seeing eye penetrates into the dark bosom of futurity, and who can cause evil to be productive of good? O my son, my first-born, let discontent no longer overcloud every cheerful prospect, and conceal from thy view every source of happiness.”

“What avail these admonitions?” cried Cain, angrily, “I know if I could be cheerful, every object around me would smile, and be serene as the morning! Can I command the tempest to cease, and the impetuous torrent to stand still? I was doomed from my birth to misery; on the nativity of the first-born the Almighty has pronounced his severest malediction. Those sources of happiness and delight, of which you take such cheering draughts, flow not for me.”

Adam expostulates with Cain.

“ Ah, my son,” exclaimed Adam, while tears bedewed his cheeks, “ yes, alas, on all the offspring of woman has the divine malediction fallen. But, my beloved son, why should God have poured on thee, our first-born, a greater portion of his wrath than on us the first transgressors? He whose goodness is infinite, could not have made such a distinction.—No, Cain, thou wast not born to misery; the Almighty has called into existence none of his creatures to make them unhappy. Man may, indeed, render himself wretched; by neglecting to enjoy the happiness betowed on him, he plunges himself into misery. When reason is silenced by the tumult of raging passions and is subdued by the violence of impure ungovernable desires, man must be wretched; he converts the blessings of life into sources of misery. Thou canst not command the tempests to cease, and the impetuous torrent to stand still, but thou mayest call forth reason to dispel the gloom which overshadows thy soul. Reason can calm the tumult in thy bosom. At her voice every vain wish, every sordid desire, and every boisterous passion, vanish like vapours before the rising sun. Ah, Cain, I have seen tears of rapture bedew thy cheeks when consciousness of a virtuous action has raised within thy soul the glow of delight. Tell me, Cain, wast thou not then happy? Wast not then thy soul serene—serene as the unclouded sun? Recal that emanation of the Deity—Reason;

Adam's anguish at the obdurance of his son.

then will her companion, Virtue, convey every pleasure to thy heart; then will every source of happiness flow also for thee. O listen to my admonitions, my son. The first duty which returning reason imposes is to go and embrace thy brother. With what joy will he receive thee! with what tenderness will he press thee to his bosom!"

"I will embrace him," said Cain, "when I return from the field; my labour now requires my care. I will embrace him; but never shall my firmer soul be softened to that effeminate tenderness which so strongly endears him to you, and draws so many tears of rapture from your eyes; to that tenderness which brought down a curse upon all mankind, when thou, yielding to a woman's tears—but, wretch that I am—I was about to reproach thee. I reverence thee, my father, and am silent." Thus spoke Cain, and returned to his labour.

Adam stood motionless; tears of anguish streamed from his eyes. "O Cain, Cain!" he exclaimed, "I feel, alas, that I have deserved thy reproaches; but yet thou shouldst have spared thy father; thou shouldst have forbore a charge, which, like a peal of thunder, bursts upon my soul. Thus—O horrible, O cruel presentment—thus will my descendants, when wallowing in guilt, and overtaken by its punishment, trample upon my dust, and curse the first sinner." Thus spoke Adam; and, with his face bowed towards

the earth, sorrowfully withdrew. He frequently lifted up his eyes to heaven; loud sighs burst from his tortured heart, and he wrang his hands in speechless agony. Cain beheld his anguish, and exclaimed, "How he wrings his hands; how he sobs and weeps; and I have reproached him; I have bitterly reproached my fond and indulgent parent. Whither does my madness drive me? Hell itself rages in my soul. It is I, yes I, who spread the gloom of torturing anxiety around them, who embitter and destroy every pleasure of their lives. Wretch, thou art not worthy to associate with men; thou shouldst dwell among the savage beasts that prowl in the desert. He is already at a distance, and yet I still hear his sighs, as with unsteady and faltering steps he retires. Shall I hasten after him, shall I embrace his knees, and, by all that is sacred, implore his forgiveness? Yes, I am sensible that my misery proceeds not from external causes; it is in mine own unguarded heart that those black clouds arise, whose tempest chases every joy from me and them. O reason, virtue, return! calm the wild tumult, and extinguish this hell which rages in my bosom. See, yonder stands my father, motionless; his uplifted hands announce the attitude of prayer. I will hasten and throw myself in the dust at his feet, wretch that I am!"

Cain then hastened to his father, who was leaning exhausted against a tree. His weeping eyes

were immoveably fixed on the ground. The sight deeply affected the heart of his son, who fell at his feet and embraced his knees. He looked up at his father, while tears trickled from his eyes, and said, "Forgive me, my father!—but I am not worthy to call thee by that name; if thou shouldst turn from me with horror it is no more than I deserve. But see, O see these tears of repentance; behold my anguish, and forgive me. I, wretch that I am, was deaf to thy exhortations; but when thou retiredst, weeping and wringing thy hands, horror thrilled my soul, roused me from my apathy, and now, now I weep at thy feet. I acknowledge my depravity; I see with abhorrence the passions which had taken possession of my soul, and implore forgiveness of the Almighty, of thee, my father, of my brother, and of all whom I have offended."

"Arise, Cain; arise, my son! that I may embrace thee," stammered the astonished father, and pressed him with fervour to his heart. "That Being who dwelleth in the heavens beholds with pleasure these thy repentant tears. Embrace me, my son, my beloved son! Oh, how hast thou changed my grief to joy! O blissful hour in which my son, my first born, restores peace, tranquillity, and every delicious sensation to our bosoms, in which he embraces us with tears of tenderness. Embrace me, support me, my son! The excess of joy overpowers me. But let us not

delay; let us go, that thou mayest also embrace thy brother."

They were now proceeding to seek him in the pasture, when Abel, accompanied by his mother, with Mehala and Thirza, approached them from behind a thicket; they had followed Adam unperceived, and had witnessed the scene behind the bushes, by which they were concealed. Abel ran with open arms to meet his brother; he embraced him, and pressed him to his heart; he wept, and was incapable of expressing his transport. "My brother, O my brother," he at length exclaimed, "and dost thou love me? Let me, O let me hear it from thy lips! Thou lovest me—O inexpressible delight!"

"Yes, brother, I love thee," replied Cain, embracing him. "Canst thou, O can you all forgive me my unkindness? Can you forgive me for having so long disturbed your peace, for having embittered your lives with anxiety and grief? My soul, darting forth like lightning from the surrounding gloom, has dispersed the furious tempests. The weeds which prevented the seeds of virtue from springing up in my bosom are eradicated, and shall never be suffered to grow again. Forgive me, my brother, and never may the memory of my past misconduct disturb our future felicity!"

"Never, never!" replied Abel, pressing him still more closely to his heart. "Should we not

Cain's reconciliation with his Brother.

forget the transient uneasiness of a nightly dream, when we awake on a spring morning, and delight and rapture pervade our souls? O Cain, Cain! O that words could express my joy, could describe to thee half my transport! I can only weep, only press thee to my breast and weep."

While the brothers were thus locked in each others embrace, Eve, with tears of joy, beheld the tender scene. "O my children," she exclaimed, "my beloved children! Never since first I heard thy lips, my first-born, lisp the sweet name of mother; never have I felt such rapturous sensations. What an oppressive burthen is removed from my soul! With what happiness and with what exquisite delight is it now pervaded! Now will each smiling hour pass away crowned with pleasure! Harmony and peace are restored to my offspring, to those whom I nourished at my breast! Yes, I am like a fruitful vine, which bears sweet grapes, and is blessed by the passenger for its delicious fruit. Embrace, my children, embrace; and now, come, let me kiss away every tear from your eyes, each of those precious tears with which fraternal affection has bedewed your cheeks." Thus said Eve, and with inexpressible transport embraced her sons. Mehala and Thirza likewise embraced them, while their eyes overflowed with tears of ecstasy. "O Thirza!" said Cain's spouse to her sister, "what unspeakable felicity! Let this day be a day of joy. Let us

go ; we will strew the fairest flowers on the table in the bower ; we will collect the finest fruits which our trees afford ; this day shall be spent in the enjoyment of our happiness." Joy gave wings to their feet, and they hastened away to perform the pleasing task.

Cain and Abel went hand in hand, and Adam and Eve, filled with the most exquisite delight, walked beside them towards the hill. When they arrived, the sisters had already spread the repast of various fruits in the shadiest bower, which they had decorated with fragrant flowers ; brilliant colours and delicious odours combined to gratify their senses. They seated themselves to their temperate noon-tide repast, accompanied by cheerfulness and joy ; the hours passed rapidly away in agreeable converse, and mild evening arrived.

THE DEATH OF ABEL.

BOOK II.

CONVERSATION IN THE BOWER.—ABEL REQUESTS ADAM TO RELATE THE EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO THE FALL.—EVE COMMENCES THE NARRATIVE.—THE STORM.—THEY PASS THE FIRST NIGHT IN A CAVE.—THE DEAD BIRD.—THEY FIX THEIR RESIDENCE.—ADAM FINDS SOME SHEEP.—THE VISIT OF AN ANGEL.—ADAM CONVERSES WITH HIM.—MESSAGE OF THE ALMIGHTY.—ADAM ERECTS AN ALTAR.—WINTER.—RETURN OF SPRING.—THE SACRIFICE.—BIRTH OF CAIN.—OF MAHALA.—ABEL AND THIRZA.

WHILE the first family of the world were in the bower, indulging domestic bliss, the father of mankind thus spoke: "It is now, my children, you experience the delight of self-approbation. The recollection of a good action diffuses a pleasing serenity through the soul. Nothing, my sons, nothing but the practice of virtue, can render us truly happy. Virtue makes us capable of the enjoyments of those pure spirits who surround the throne of God. While we follow the dictates of reason, while we enjoy with gratitude and love the blessings of nature, and have humble hope and confidence in God our Maker, we anticipate the delights of heaven; but if we suffer our passions to degrade and subdue us, inquietude, distress, and misery, will darken all our prospects: in vain will the heavens smile; **in vain** will the fruitful earth pour forth her bounties. Believe me, my dear children, believe **a** father, made wise by his own fatal experience, the joys of sin are followed by shame, sorrow, and

Our Maker formed us pure and spotless. While innocent, the happy spirits, who behold the face of God, deigned with complacency to visit our blest abode; deigned to instruct us in our duty; to warn us of our danger. What are we now?—dreadful degradation! O Adam! thy perfidious wife has involved thee, by her seductions, in sin and sorrow. Yet, dear accomplice, to whom with awe I raise my pitying eye, do not hate me! Thou hast a right to curse me;—but, O dear spouse! if I may still call thee by that tender name, use it not! for thou art my sole support. By that God whom we have offended, by the cheering promises of his indulgent goodness, I conjure thee not to forsake me. All I request is, that I may follow and serve thee. I will watch thy looks; I will anticipate thy commands; happy if my obedience, my weak services gain from thee a pitying smile, a look of soft compassion.'

“ Here my strength and voice failed; I was sinking to the earth, but my dear husband caught me in his arms, and pressed me, with a look of affection, to his heart. ‘O Eve!’ he cried, whom I still, and always will, tenderly love, let us not heighten our keen distress by self-reproach. Our God, in the midst of punishment, has remembered mercy. He has softened his chastisements by his promises. Veiled as these promises are in a sacred obscurity, the Divine Goodness appears with sensible radiance, and we will hope in his mercy. We will not reproach ourselves—we will not reproach each other. O my dearest! had God only consulted his just indignation, where should we both have been now? We will praise him for his goodness; our lips shall bless his name: our voice shall only be heard in his thanksgiving, humble supplications, and expressions of endearment and love. Our judge is omniscient: with him there is no darkness. He sees the humiliation of our souls: he beholds our

gratitude, our sincere contrition: he knows our weaknesses, and will accept of our feeble efforts to regain perfection. Embrace me, my dearest wife! Let us, by mutual tenderness and acts of kindness, endeavour to alleviate our calamity.'

"Adam ceased speaking. His words and tender caresses gave ease to my oppressed heart, and strength and activity to my enfeebled limbs. We proceeded to the bottom of the hill, where we found a grove of poplars, which extended to the foot of a rock." Eve then giving her husband a look of affection, was silent, and Adam thus continued:

"We advanced, my children, through the grove, and found in the rock a cavity that formed a grotto. 'See, dearest Eve,' said I, 'see the convenience offered us by nature: this grotto will afford us shelter; and this pure spring, that murmuring flows from its side, will slake our thirst: we will here prepare our lodging: But, my dearest wife, before we sleep, I must secure the entrance, to keep us from being surprised by nocturnal enemies.'—'What enemies?' returned Eve with emotion: 'What enemies have we to fear?'—'Hast thou not remarked, my love,' said I, 'that the curse of our sin has fallen upon the whole creation? The bands of friendship are broken between the animals; and the weak are now become the prey of the strong. I have seen a young lion pursue with fatal rage a frightened roe: I have beheld a war in the air among the birds. We can no longer claim a right to command the animals: the spotted leopard, the brindled lion, and fierce tiger, no more fawn on us, nor play their wanton gambols in our sight, but cast against us frightful roarings, while their blazing eyes threaten destruction. We will try to gain, by our kindness, those among the beasts that are most tractable; and Providence

has given us reason, which will teach us to secure ourselves from the most savage.'

" Eve, with timid looks, keeping me in her sight, went to gather flowers and leaves to form our bed, and fruit for our repast. In the mean time I secured the entrance of the grotto with entwined brambles. My spouse, hastened by fear, quickly performed her task ; and returning, rested herself before me on the tender grass.

" We soon after entered the grotto, and seating ourselves on our bed of intermingled leaves and flowers, began our frugal meal, seasoned, however, with mutual endearments and grateful converse, when a gloomy cloud suddenly obscured the declining sun. It spread over our heads with increasing darkness ; and the black veil which covered the earth seemed to presage the destruction of all nature. A tempestuous wind arose ; it bellowed in the mountains ; it overthrew the trees of the forest : flames darted from the clouds, and loud bursts of thunder augmented the horrors of this tremendous scene. Eve, struck with terror, threw herself, scarce breathing, into my arms, and clinging to my breast, cried, ' He comes !---he comes !---in flames he comes to bring the threatened death !---How dreadful !---For my sin he comes to give death to us, and to all nature !---O Adam !---O my love !---Here her voice failed, and she remained trembling and pale on my bosom. ' Be calm, my love ! ' I cried : ' compose thyself ! We will with bended knees and contrite hearts adore our God, who, in terrible majesty, comes riding on the clouds. His thunders proclaim his approach ; the darting fires mark his passage. O thou Eternal ! who, with benignity and goodness, tempered the insupportable radiance of thy dignity when I first came from thy creating hand, thou art terrible in judgment ; yet suffer us not to be

consumed by thy wrath ! Destroy us not, O God ! in thy hot displeasure.'

" We then prostrated ourselves at the entrance of the grotto, and, with pale countenances and trembling lips, offered up our adorations ; expecting when our awful Judge would from the clouds pronounce, by his thunders, ' Die, ye ungrateful ! and let the earth that bore you be dissolved by the fire of my indignation !'

" The clouds now poured forth their torrents : livid flames no longer flashed from the heavens, and thunder rolled at a distance. I raised my head from the ground, saying, ' The Almighty, my dear Eve, hath passed by. He hath not destroyed the earth : we are yet permitted to live : he hath remembered his promises. Eternal Wisdom, Everlasting Truth, repenteth not. He will fulfil the designs of his mercy ; and thy seed, O Eve ! shall bruise the head of the serpent !'

" We arose, and were comforted. The heavens resumed their brightness, and the setting sun spread a mild radiance through the sky, like the luminous track we used to behold in Eden, when legions of angels were carried above our heads on the flying clouds. Silence reigned over the moist fields : the herbage and flowers, still glittering with the drops of heaven, glowed with more than usual beauty. The departing sun darted on us his last beams, while we celebrated with reverential awe and thankful love, the wisdom, power, and mercy of our Creator.

" Thus passed the first day after our leaving Paradise. The ruddy evening gave place to the grey twilight, and soon the earth was only enlightened by the moon's feeble rays. We now for the first time, were chilled by the cold of the night, though a few hours before we had almost fainted under the ardent rays of the scorching sun at noon. Our beneficent Maker had condescended to gird our loins with the

skins of beasts before our leaving Paradise, to show that he had not withdrawn from us his succouring hand; in these we wrapped ourselves; and lying down on our leafy bed, hand in hand, waited the approach of sleep.

“ Sleep, the relief of the weary, at length came; but it was unaccompanied with that soft ease, that sweet delight, which blessed our slumbers while innocent. Our imagination then presented none but smiling and agreeable images: inquietude, fear, and remorse, did not then keep us waking the tedious hours of darkness, nor mingle in our dreams with fantastic phantoms. The heavens were however calm, and our rest was undisturbed: but, oh! how different from that delicious night, when I led thee, my spouse, for the first time, to the nuptial bower! The flowers and odoriferous shrubs charmed with new sweetness. Never was the warbling of the nightengale so harmonious: never did the pale moon shine with such radiance!—But why do I dwell on images that awaken my grief, now hushed to silence?

“ We slept till the morning sun had dried up the limpid dew. When we awoke, we found ourselves refreshed and fitted for labour; and enjoyed with delight and gratitude the harmony of the birds, who were celebrating, with their sweetest notes, the renewed light. Their number was yet but small; for there were then no other animals on the earth but those who, instructed by Divine instinct, had, after the fall, fled from Paradise, that the garden of the Lord might not be defiled by death.

“ We offered up our adorations at the entrance of the grotto; after which, I said to Eve, ‘ We will, my love, go farther, and view this immense country: our All-merciful God has given us liberty of choice. We may fix our abode where the earth is most fertile, where nature is most profuse of her beauties. Seest

thou, Eve, that river which, like a huge serpent, winds in bright slopes through the meadows? The hill on its bank seems, at this distance, like a garden full of trees, and its top is covered with verdure.'---' My dear spouse,' returned Eve, pressing my hand to her bosom,

I shall follow with delight the steps of thee, my conductor and guard. We will pursue our walk towards the hill.'

"We were going on, when we saw, just above our heads, a bird fly with feeble wing: its feathers were rough and disordered: it cast forth plaintive cries, and, having fluttered a little in the air, sunk down without strength among the bushes. Eve went to seek it, and beheld another lie without motion on the grass, which that we had before seen seemed to lament. My spouse stooping over it, examined it with fixed attention, and in vain tried to rouse it from what she believed to be sleep. 'It will not wake.' said she to me in a fearful voice, laying the bird from her trembling hand: 'It will not wake!—It will never wake more!' She then burst into tears, and speaking to the lifeless bird, said, 'Alas! the poor bird that pierced my ears with his cries was perhaps thy mate. It is I!—it is I! unhappy that I am! who have brought misery and grief on every creature! For my sin these pretty harmless animals are punished.' Her tears redoubled. 'What an event!' said she, turning to me; 'How stiff and cold it is! It has neither voice nor motion: its joints no longer bend: its limbs refuse their office. Speak, Adam! is this death? Ah it is. — How I tremble! An icy cold runs through my bones. If the death with which we are threatened is like this, how terrible!—What, dearest Adam! would become of me, if, like the feathered mate of this poor bird, I am left behind to mourn? Or what of thee, if death tear me from thy fond arms? Should God create another Eve to fill my forfeited place in thy loved bosom,

she will not--cannot love like me, thy partner in distress and banishment!--Unable to say more, she wept, she sobbed; and her expressive eyes, tenderly fixed on mine, made my feeling heart partake her anguish. I pressed her to my breast, kissed her cheek and mixed my tears with her's. 'Cease, dearest Eve! I cried, 'these fond complaints. Dry up thy tears. Have confidence in the Supreme Being, who governs all his creatures by his infinite wisdom! Though we cannot penetrate into the designs of his providence; though his majestic tribunal is surrounded by darkness, we may rest assured, that mercy and love remain near his throne. Why, my love, should we anticipate misfortunes? Why should we, guided by a gloomy imagination, seek for them in futurity? Was our reason given us only to make us wretched? Shall we ungratefully turn our eyes from the repeated instances of the loving-kindness and tender mercy of our God, at the hazard of plunging ourselves in misery by our blindness? It is his wisdom and his goodness that regulate and appoint what shall befall us. Let us, with humble confidence, proceed under his direction, and devoutly acquiesce in his appointments, without seeking to know what he hath not condescended to reveal.'

"We now advanced to the eminence. Its gentle ascent was almost covered with bushes and fertile shrubs. On the summit, in the midst of fruit-trees, grew a lofty cedar, whose thick branches formed an extensive shade, which was rendered more cool and delightful by a limpid brook, that ran in various windings among the flowers. This spot afforded a prospect so immense, that the sight was only bounded by the dusky air; the sky forming a concave around us, that appeared, wherever we turned, to touch the distant mountains. 'Here,' said I, 'my dearest love, we will fix our abode. This spot is a faint shadow of

Paradise, whose blissful bowers we must never more behold. Receive us, majestic cedar, under thy shade! Ye trees of various taste and hue, refresh and sustain us with your delicious fruits! Never shall we gather the sweet produce without gratitude: it shall be the reward of our attentive care and laborious cultivation. O God Omnipotent! who reignest in heaven, look with a propitious eye on this our dwelling! Lend an ear of compassion to the supplications; receive with favour the praises and thanksgivings, which we, thy frail offending creatures, shall never cease to send up towards thy celestial throne, through the spreading branches of these trees! Here, my dearest wife, we shall obtain, by the sweat of our brows, our support. Under these shades thou shalt bring forth with pain: From hence will our offspring spread themselves over the wide earth. Here, too, death shall one day visit us, and we shall be confounded with our original dust. O Lord God, our Maker, shower down thy blessings on the profane abode of us sinners!’ While I thus uttered the devout breathings of my soul, Eve was prostrate on the earth by my side: her hands were elevated; her eyes swam in tears, and were raised towards heaven in holy ecstasy.

“I now began to construct our habitation under the shade of the spreading cedar. I fixed in the earth a circle of strong stakes, and interwove them with flexible twigs. While I was thus employed, Eve was conveying the stream among the flowers; gathering ripe fruits; supporting, with small sticks, the bending stalks of the variegated shrubs, and pruning their luxuriant branches. Then it was that we began to eat our bread by the sweat of our brows.

“I went to the river to fetch reeds to cover our cottage: there I saw five ewes, white as the southern clouds, and with them a young ram, feeding by the side of the water. I approached them without noise, fearing they

would fly me, like the tiger and the lion, who, before our fatal transgression, used to play with the kid or the lamb at our feet: but, instead of endeavouring to escape me, they suffered me to stroke their fleeces; and I drove them before me with a reed to our hill, where I intended they should for the future feed. Eve was busy in erecting a bower, and did not, immediately on my return, observe my little flock; but they soon discovered themselves by their bleating. She started at the sound, and dropped the boughs from her hand through fear; but soon recovering, she cried, with joy in her countenance, ‘O Adam! they are gentle and fond as in Paradise. Welcome, pretty animals! ye shall live with us. All ye want is here. Ye need not stray; for here are flowery pastures, fragrant herbage, and a clear spring. Your innocent sporting will give us delight, while we attend to our trees and flowers. Yes, harmless creatures!’ she continued, patting their woolly backs, ‘ye shall be my flock, and I will be your indulgent mistress.’

“Our little dwelling was now completed; and we were enjoying the cool breezes at its entrance, and silently surveying the distant country, when Eve said, ‘My dearest love, how beautifully is the prospect before us variegated! How fertile, how full of blessings is this earth, which we thought so barren! Let us, to the fruits and flowers which the hill already yields, add those that grow on its borders, and our abode will have a faint resemblance of Eden’s delightful shades. Ah!’ she added with a sigh, ‘it will then bear but the same proportion of likeness to Paradise, as that does to the blissful seats of the angels, which the heavenly messengers, who in our happy days of innocence condescended to visit us, described in such glowing colours. O! thou garden of the Lord, how delightful were thy sweet retreats! how did thy gay tints charm the eye! how did thy luscious fruits, thy

aromatic fragrance, feast the senses ! Whatever necessity required ; all the useful, all the agreeable, were there in rich profusion. O my spouse ! compared with that luxuriant spot, what is all about us but dry sterility ? This earth, under the divine malediction, seems unable to produce in the same lands, that sweet variety, that happy diversity, that charmed us in Eden's bowers. We must now seek the different productions in distant places. I have seen, too, that not only animals are the prey of death : he stretches his wide domain ; he tyrannizes over the whole earth, and makes rude havock in the world of vegetation. O Adam ! what fruits have I beheld drop from their branches, spoiled, and full of black rottenness ! what flowers wither on their stalks ! The trees are disrobed of their verdure by the spoiler Death. I have observed, too, that young leaves supply the place of those that are fallen ; and that the seeds of dead flowers, cast into the earth, produce new ones. We, Adam, must thus one day wither and die, and our children shall successively grow up and flourish.'

"She ceased speaking ; and I, deeply affected by her words, made answer, ' Dear Eve ! were our loss only the gay verdure, the fruits and flowers of Paradise, it would scarce deserve a sigh : but, alas ! we are expelled from the sacred spot which our Maker blessed by his immediate presence. There, veiling his insupportable radiance, he walked among the groves, while all Nature celebrated the approach of the Deity in reverential silence. Though formed of the dust, my prostrations were accepted. The Almighty condescended to hear his creature, and vouchsafed to answer, with benignity, a frail worm. Alas ! we have, by our disobedience, lost this privilege : guilty as we are, we can no more hope to converse with infinite Purity. This, this calls for our lamentations and our tears. Will the God of heaven visit a land under his

curse? Will the Most Holy dwell among sinners? He looks down from the seats of bliss; he regards with an eye of compassion, our penitence and tears, and his bounties exceed every hope our wretchedness could form. Even the bright spirits of heaven are his messengers; they execute his orders on this dark globe; but, alas! our polluted eyes are now unworthy to behold them! They perform the task assigned, without deigning to become visible to sinful man, and then soar with hasty wing from this seat of corruption, now fit only to be the residence of beings under the curse of their Sovereign.'

"Thus were we holding converse, and casting our melancholy eyes on the country before us, when a resplendent cloud descending, glided towards us, and rested on our hill. From it stepped a radiant form, wearing on his face a majestic smile. We hastily arose; we bowed our heads, and the celestial messenger thus spoke: "He whose throne is in the highest heaven has heard your complaints. Go, said he, and inform those children of affliction, that my presence is not circumscribed by the circuit of heaven! it extends to all the work of my hands. Whence has the sun its invigorating heat? Who teaches the stars to run their courses? Why does the earth bring forth its fruit, and day and night regularly succeed each other? Who preserves the various animals? In me they live, move, and have their being. What keeps thee, Adam, from sinking into corruption? I am near thee: I sustain thee by my power! I guard thee by my providence: and know the secret breathings of thy soul, and all the purposes of thine heart."

"The luminous sphere that encompassed the angel reached even to me. Filled with devout ecstasy, I raised up to him my dazzled eyes. 'How great, beyond conception,' said I, 'are the favours of the Lord! He beholds our wretchedness with compassion:

he sends his angels to give us comfort. O effulgent spirit! I stand confounded and abashed before thee. How shall I, sinful man that I am, dare to speak to thee, the unoffending messenger of heaven, arrayed in light and purity? Yet, O benevolent angel! permit me to mention the sad apprehensions and fears that oppress my heart. That God is every where present, I readily believe. I see him in his works: I feel him in his goodness and tender mercies. That the Most High, a Being perfect in purity, should more intimately communicate himself to a worm defiled with sin, I do not presume to expect. What I dread is, that when man shall be multiplied on the earth, he will be estranged from God his Maker. I have fallen; my children may also fall—fall into more horrid depths; and thus, being more and more debased, their wretchedness will increase. The time will come, when I shall be no longer with them, to inform them, and give, in my own person, evident proofs of the loving-kindness and compassion of the Lord. It is true, the smallest insect will declare his beneficence: but if God continues to hide his face from man, will not the voice of nature be too weak to strike his mind? Will not the idea of Deity be totally lost, or, at least, confounded in darkness and obscurity?—This thought gives my foreboding heart exquisite anguish. I tremble with horror, when my gloomy imagination represents to my view millions of creatures sunk in distress and guilt, who may execrate me as the cause of their blindness and misery.’—‘Father of men,’ replied the angel, with aspect benign, ‘he in whom, and by whom, all things exist, will not forsake thine offspring. Often will they, by their transgressions, presumptuously affront the Majesty of heaven: often will their sins cry aloud for vengeance. The Almighty will grasp his thunder, and display the terrors of his judgments. The guilty shall tremble in the dust;

the sinner shall cry out in agony, Dreadful is the wrath of God! who can stand before it? But more often will he make himself known in kindness: He will delight to show favour to the repenting children of men. Mercy and compassion dwell always with him; judgment is his strange work. He will raise from among thy posterity men whose minds he will enlighten: they, assisted by the Spirit of God, shall call their brethren to repentance. Sinners shall hearken, and, forsaking the ways of sensuality and profaneness, shall worship a Being of spotless purity, in spirit and in truth. He will send among them prophets and holy persons, whose mission he will evidence by miracles: these chosen of the Lord shall cure the diseased, raise the dead, and do many wonderful works. These shall make known the judgments of the Most High: they shall declare his condescension and grace; they shall foretell what will happen in distant periods of time; and the accomplishment of their prophecies will teach men that the Eternal over-rules and directs, according to his good pleasure and the merciful designs of his providence, events that appear, to short-sighted mortals, the work of a blind chance. Often will he speak to the sons of men by his angels; frequently in prodigies: and there will be some righteous persons to whom he will, with infinite goodness, more intimately manifest himself; to them he will speak face to face; till at length shall be ushered in the great mystery of the salvation of mankind, when the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

“The angel was silent; and I, encouraged by the condescension and sweetness of his look, replied, ‘O celestial friend! if thou wilt yet allow me, frail as I am, to call thee so; and why should I doubt it! since thou canst not hate him whom the Eternal does not hate—him for whom the divine clemency manifests

itself with such splendor as strikes the heavenly host with admiration, and surpasses the power of words to express, when the adoring soul, humbled in the dust, attempts to pour forth its gratitude—Tell me, lucid spirit, if it be permitted thee to draw from the obscurity with which they are surrounded, those august mysteries—tell me, what is the import of the promise, The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head : and what is meant by the curse denounced against man, Thou shalt die.'—' Nothing that the Most High permits me to reveal,' answered the angel, ' will I hide from thee. Know then, O Adam ! on thy transgressing the divine command, God said to the happy spirits who worship before him, Man hath disobeyed me : he shall die ! A dense cloud suddenly encompassed the eternal throne, and a deep silence reigned through the whole expanse of heaven : the celestial host were filled with consternation : but soon the darkness dispersed, and the praise of the Highest again resounded from the harps of the angels. Never did God manifest himself with such lustre and magnificence, but in that memorable instant when his creative voice called the stars from non-existence, and his almighty word went on creating through the immensity of space. The adoring angels were in eager expectation of what was to follow this unusual pomp, when the majestic voice of God sounded through the arch of heaven, uttering these words of benignity and grace : I will not withdraw my favour from the sinner : to my infinite mercy the earth shall bear witness. Of the woman shall be borne an avenger, who shall bruise the head of the serpent. Hell shall not rejoice in this victory : Death shall lose its prey. Ye heavens, show forth your gladness !---Thus spake the Eternal. The blaze of his glory would have been too strong for even the eyes of archangels, had not a thin cloud tempered its insupportable radiance. The blessed inhabitants

of heaven celebrated with joy this great mystery, and attuned their golden harps to the praises of the Father of Spirits, whose tender mercies are over all his works. How God will pardon the sinner without offending his justice, surpasses comprehension; but it is enough, Eternal Truth hath said it. We know, and thou mayest also rest assured, that Death, having lost his power, can only disengage the soul from its bonds. The body, that vesture of earth, shall return to the dust, of which it was formed, while the immortal spirit, refined from all defilement, shall be raised to heaven, to partake there, with angels, archangels, and all the celestial hosts, never-ending felicity. Hear, Adam, the order of thy God! I will be gracious to thee, and to thy seed. There shall be a sign between me and thee, as the seal of this great promise: thou shalt build an altar on this hill, and offer on it a young lamb: I will, on my part, send down fire to consume the victim. This sacrifice thou shalt renew every year, and the flame shall annually descend to burn thine offering. I have now told thee, first of men,' continued the angel, 'all that the Most High thinks proper to reveal of his inscrutable decrees. I am also allowed to show thee, that ye are not so solitary on this globe as ye imagine. Cursed as this earth is, ye are still surrounded by pure spirits, who are commissioned to be your guard and defence, and ordered to preside with watchful care over the works of nature.'

"The angel then touching our eye-lids, we beheld beauties that I shall not attempt to describe. No words could give it, as that would do justice to the bright magnificence of the scene. All the country around was peopled with the children of heaven, more beautiful than Eve when she first came from the hands of her Creator, and with soft reluctance, and modest grace, received her welcome in my arms.

"Some were employed in collecting the light mists

that issued from the moist earth ; they bore them upwards on their expanded wings, and converted them into mild dews and fertilizing showers. Others lay reclined near purling brooks, watching lest their sources should fail, and the plants they watered be deprived of their humid aliment. Many were dispersed through the open country, who presided over the growth of fruits, and spread on the opening flowers, azure, green and red, with every vivid hue and, by breathing on them, impregnated them with fragrance. Some peopled the groves, employed in various offices : from the glittering wings of these were wafted gentle breezes, which, passing through the foliage of the trees, hovered over the flowers, and skimmed along the surface of the brooks and lakes. Some among these celestial labourers, having performed the task assigned them, were sitting in the shade, joining in harmonious concert : the melody of their voices accompanied the sounding strings of their golden harps ; and they sang to the praise of the Most High, hymns not to be heard by mortal ears. Not a few were walking on our hill, and among our bowers : in their gentle looks I beheld commiseration of our distress. But now our eyes again became unable to behold the heavenly effulgence, and the rapturous scene disappeared. ‘ These, which you have just beheld,’ said the angel, ‘ are spirits commissioned to watch over the productions of the earth : they are the appointed assistants of Nature, and help to promote and complete her various works, according to the invariable and immutable laws of the great First Cause. The Creator has given existence to innumerable orders of beings. Even this earth, though under the curse of the Most High, is full of beauty ; and the admiring angels behold, on this globe, objects too sublime for mortal sight. The delightful employ-

ment of some of these children of heaven, is to watch over thy safety, O Adam! to avert from thee unforeseen misfortunes. They accompany thee in all thy ways: they assist thee in thy labours, and often turn even thy disappointments to thy advantage, bringing from an apparent evil a real good. They, with pleasure, behold thy domestic happiness. They are witnesses of thy most secret actions. A smile of benevolence shows their joy, when man, their charge, acts right; the frown of disdain and sorrow sits on their brow, when he forgets himself and his happiness. These, in future ages the Lord will employ to distribute plenty through the countries he will delight to bless, or to carry famine and desolation among rebellious nations, when it shall please him to recall them by his chastisements.'

"The angel ceased speaking. He cast on us a look of mild condescension, and was lost to our eyes in a shining cloud. We prostrated ourselves on the earth with devout ecstasy, and humbly offered up our thanksgivings to our beneficent and all-merciful Creator.

"I immediately set up the altar, as the Lord had commanded, on the summit of the hill: Eve employed herself in constructing around it a little paradise. She brought from the neighbouring plain the most beautiful and odoriferous flowers: these she planted on all sides of the altar, and with cheerful labour, watered them, each morning and evening, from the clear stream that flowed near our dwelling. 'O tutelar angels!' said she, in the midst of her labour, 'complete the work of my hands; for without your aid, in vain shall I plant, in vain shall I water! May your kind cares, bright spirits, give these flowers more life, more beauty, more fragrance than they had in their native soil! for to the Lord of All this enclosure is consecrated!' I planted a spacious circle of trees

Around the holy altar, and their thick branches spread an awful shade, that disposed the mind to devout contemplation.

“ In these occupations we passed the summer, exposed each day to the scorching sun. Autumn arrived, and repaid our labour with its various fruits. It drew near its close: the loud blasts of the north began to be heard, and the tops of the mountains began to be covered with an hoar frost. Not then knowing that the weak earth, which was exhausted by the profuse liberality of summer and autumn, wanted to recover her strength by the rest of winter, we saw, with grief the saddened face of Nature. In Eden we knew no change of seasons: mild spring, gay summer, and plenteous autumn, charmed there together. As the winter advanced, the face of Nature wore increasing gloom: the flowers withered on the stalks, and, if any yet survived about the altar, they seemed, with drooping heads, to mourn their approaching fall. The latest fruits fell from the trees, and the sapless branches cast their leaves. The clouds poured down torrents of rain, and the highest peaks of the mountains were covered with snow. We beheld the scene of desolation with fear and anxiety. ‘ Should this, my dearest Eve,’ said I, ‘ be only the first effects of the curse pronounced against this earth, and God continues to punish, she will be stripped of the small remains of utility and beauty which her degradation has left her: small were they in comparison of the delights of Paradise; yet they were sufficient to soften our toil, and afforded us many of the conveniences and blessings of life: but if the divine malediction continues to spread destruction on this earth, how gloomy will be our days! What will become of our promised offspring?’ Thus we mourned our melancholy situation: but, encouraged by the promises of our God, we placed in

him an humble confidence. We endeavoured to console each other, and to drive from our minds every thought of murmuring or discontent, and thankfully adored the Lord, in the midst of the dreary horrors by which we were surrounded.

“ We laid up for our winter support those fruits that had escaped corruption and rottenness ; and, that they might be still preserved, we dried them by fire. I covered our cottage anew, and made a closer fence around, to keep out the cold and the rain. In the mean time, our little flock languidly wandered on the eminence, gaining a scanty support by nipping the short grass that still remained, or here and there sprung afresh : and I, for their farther relief, ranged the country to seek them fodder, which I carefully preserved, lest they should perish, if the rigors of winter increased.

“ Sad and slow passed our days, while the clouded sky poured forth rain, and the bleak winds chilled us with cold. But at length the genial sun re-animated the earth, and brightened the heavens, while gentle winds chased the moist fogs from the summits of the mountains. Reviving Nature smiled at the return of youth : the fields were again clothed in cheerful green : innumerable flowers decked the pastures, and seemed to vie with the sun in lustre : the trees again began to shoot out their buds, and all Nature was full of new-born joy. Thus, crowned with leaves and flowers, came amiable spring, that delightful morning of the year.

“ The trees with which I had surrounded the altar were pre-eminent in beauty. Eve saw, with inexpressible rapture, the flowers she had planted on the holy spot recover their bloom, In vain, my children, should I attempt to give you an idea of our joyful ecstasy. We ran to the consecrated circle, filled with devout gratitude. The sun illumined the sacred spot with

his purest radiance. Every creature seemed to join in our praises of the Creator. The flowers exhaled their sweetest odours; the trees extended the shade of their blossoming branches over the holy altar; the winged insects that inhabited the tender grass chirped forth their joy, while the birds on the spreading boughs of the trees enlivened our devotion by their mellifluous harmony. We cast ourselves on our knees: tears of gratitude and joy burst from our eyes, fell on the grassy turf, and mingled with the dew of the morning. Our fervid prayer ascended towards the Lord of Nature, towards the God of Grace and Goodness, who had mercifully turned even the effects of his just displeasure to our advantage.

“I now began to cultivate a little field upon the hill. I cast into the fertile earth some grains which I had preserved from the produce of autumn. I even enriched the land with seeds I had gathered in the distant country. Nature, chance, or reflection, often discovered to me means to facilitate my labour. Often, too, ignorance of the seasons, and of the proper soils for the different productions, led me into errors. Frequently my imagination deceived me, and I was disappointed, when I had high hopes that I had found the art of contracting my labours. I should sometimes have been without resource, had not the gentle spirits, who watched over my happiness, condescended to enlighten me.

“One morning, as I cast my eyes towards the altar, I beheld, with awe, the flame of the Lord burning over it. The rising sun gilded with his beams the ascending smoke. Enraptured, I called to my beloved: ‘See, dearest Eve!’ I cried, ‘see the accomplishment of the promise! Behold, the sacred flame is come down on our altar! Let us go to it immediately. Every labour must now cease. I will, as the Almighty hath commanded, kill a young lamb. Haste, my love,

and choose the finest flowers to strew the sacrifice. I took the best of my flock: but, my children, it is impossible to give you a description of what I felt, when I went to deprive the innocent animal of life. A trembling seized my hand; I was scarce able to hold the struggling victim; and never could I have brought myself to give it death, had not my resolution been animated by the express command of the Author of life. The very remembrance of its endeavours to escape gives me pain. When I beheld its quivering limbs in the last moments of its existence, an universal tremor shook my own: and when it lay before me, without sense or motion, dreadful forebodings invaded my troubled soul. In obedience to the divine command, I laid the bleeding lamb on the altar, and Eve scattered on it odoriferous flowers. We then prostrated ourselves on the earth before it, with reverence and fear, and offered up our humble praises to the God of Truth, who had thus solemnly verified his promises. An awful silence reigned around us, as if Nature celebrated the presence of her God. In this perfect calm our ravished ears were charmed with the minstrelsy of heaven. The angels that hovered over us joined in our devout praises. The flames soon consumed the sacrifice; and on its extinction, which was sudden, an aromatic odour diffused itself through the far extended country.

“ A little after this solemn day of reconciliation, I was going, at sun-set, to rest myself, after the fatigue of the day, near my beloved. I ascended the hill: I sought for her in vain in our cottage: I looked for her, with anxiety, in the shady bower. At length I found her, pale and without strength, at the side of the spring, and thee, Cain, my first-born, lying on her bosom. The pains of childbirth had seized her while she was employed in her ordinary labours near the brook. She was bedewing thine infant face with tears

of joy. At sight of me, she cried, with a smile, ‘ I salute thee, father of men! The Lord hath assisted me in the hour of distress; I have brought forth this son, to whom, I have given the name of Cain. O thou dear first-born!’ said she, ‘ the Lord hath favourably regarded the hour of thy birth: may all thy days be consecrated to his praise! How weak, how helpless is he that is born of a woman! Mayest thou, dear infant, rise a young flower in the spring! May thy life be a sweet perfume offered up to heaven!’ I then took thee, my first-born, in my arms, ‘ I salute thee,’ said I to Eve, ‘ I salute thee, mother of men! The Lord be praised, who hath assisted thee in thy distress! I salute thee, Cain, first of human beings who gave pain to thy mother; first of the human race who entered into life to leave it by death. O God! continued I, ‘ look down from thy throne, and regard with compassion this thy feeble creature! Shed thy gracious benediction on the morning of his life! It shall be my delightful task to instruct his young mind: I will show him the miracles of thy grace. I will teach him the wonders of thy love. Morning and evening his infant lips shall be taught to sound forth thy praise. O! dearest Eve, mother of men,’ I cried in the transport of my heart, ‘ a race without number shall flourish around thee. This myrtle was, like thee, solitary, till the tender suckers sprang from the maternal root. When mild spring shall clothe it with new verdure, the first shoots will produce others, and, in time, this single myrtle shall form a little aromatic grove. In the same manner, (let this prospect console thee in thy present weakness,) in the same manner shall our offspring multiply around this eminence. We shall, from its summit, see their peaceful dwellings adorn the plain: we shall see them, if death delays its approach long enough to permit us—we shall see them lend each other mutual assistance, to

gain the provisions, the conveniences, and the sweets of life. Often will we descend from this hill to visit our children's children; and under their fertile shades will we recount the wonders of the Lord, and exhort them to piety and gratitude. When they taste of joy, we will share it with them: we will sympathize in their griefs, and give them consolation and advice. From the top of this ascent we shall see—with gratitude and joy we shall see, a thousand altars smoke around. Their burnt-offerings shall envelope us in sacred clouds, through which our fervent prayers shall ascend to the great Creator in behalf of the human race. And when the solemn day shall come, when the flame of heaven shall descend upon the first and most holy altar, they shall assemble on this hill. We will lead them to sacrifice; and, in holy transport, we shall behold the fruit of our loins form around us a vast circle of prostrate worshippers.'

"Thus, O Cain! did I utter the sweet effusions of my heart. I kissed thine infant lips with the most tender joy. Thy mother then took thee in her enfeebled arms, when, having assisted her to rise, I led her to our dwelling.

"Strength and vigour soon began to animate thy little members. Laughter and gaiety sparkled in thine eyes, and mirth played on thy cheeks. Already wert thou able to run with thy tender feet on the soft grass, and among the flowers; already thy lips began to lisp forth thine infant thoughts, when Eve brought into the world Mahala, thy spouse. Full of joy, you skipped about the new-born, kissed her, and covered her with flowers. Eve at length brought forth thee, O Abel! and afterwards Thirza, thy companion. With inexpressible joy we beheld your innocent pleasures. Our delight increased as we saw your young minds unfold themselves, and arrive, by little and little, at maturity. We employed our most attentive care to

cultivate your mental powers, to direct your thoughts to worthy objects, that your lives might diffuse the agreeable odour of virtue. Thus a variety of flowers, combined by art, form the fragrant nosegay. While you, my children, yet prattled on my knee, or chaced each other through the grove in wanton play, I discovered that Man born in sin needs cultivation, like the stubborn earth, cursed for our transgression; and that vigilance and watchful care were necessary in the arduous task of forming the mind. To teach the young idea how to shoot; to guide the pliant heart from the turbulence of the passions; to make the powers and noble inclinations of the soul bring forth their genuine fruits, virtue and piety, require all the teacher's art—all the parent's love.

“I have now, my beloved children, the happiness to see you arrived at your full growth, as the tender plants are by the hand of time transformed into lofty and wide spreading trees. Praised be the God of heaven, for his innumerable mercies! adored for ever be his name, for his unmerited goodness! May you, my dear offspring, by your filial love, humble gratitude, and devout reverence, continue faithful to him! and may the grace and benediction of the Most High always rest on your dwellings!”

Adam here finished his recital. A nymph, united by the soft bands of Hymen to her favourite swain, wanders with him in the early dawn. They hear the sweet notes of the nightingale, while all is silence around. Her voice seems the echo of their own fond thoughts, and through their soul is diffused a tender transport. The bird ceases her melody; but they still listen, with the ear of expectation turned towards the branches from whence she chanted her nocturnal song. Thus, though our general father ceased to speak, his children remained fixed in mute attention. The different scenes he had represented gave them

various emotions : sometimes the gushing tear dropped from their eyes ; at others, a lively joy spread itself over their features. They all returned their thanks to the father of men : Cain rendered his as well as the others ; but he alone had neither smiled nor wept.

BOOK III.

CONVERSATION OF ABEL AND THIRZA.—OF CAIN AND MAHALA.—ANAMALECH'S JOURNEY TO THE EARTH.—HIS SOLILOQUY.—HE FIXES UPON CAIN AS INSTRUMENTAL TO EXECUTE HIS HORRID DESIGNS.—ADAM'S ILLNESS.—HIS ADDRESS TO HIS FAMILY.—EVE'S AFFLICTION.—ABEL'S PRAYER.—AN ANGEL BRINGS HIM FLOWERS AND HERBS, AND DIRECTS HIM TO USE THEM TO RECOVER HIS FATHER.—CAIN'S ENVY.—ADAM'S THANKS TO THE ALMIGHTY FOR HIS RECOVERY.—SACRIFICES OF CAIN AND ABEL.—CAIN'S SOLILOQUY.

ADAM having finished his relation, Abel again tenderly embraced his brother ; and they all left the bower, each pair taking their way to their separate dwellings, while the moon's mild rays enlightened their steps. " O my Thirza ! " cried Abel to his beloved, pressing her hand, " what exquisite joy diffuses itself through my soul ! My brother is no longer estranged from me : he loves me : his moistened cheek spoke his tenderness, while he gave me the fraternal embrace. How did my heart rejoice in the sweet effusion of his returned affection ! Less delightful, less refreshing is the evening dew that falls on the parched earth, after it has been scorched by the sun's burning rays. The furious tempest of his soul is calmed : peace and love are returned : they will again take up their abode in our humble cottages, and give new sweets to every enjoyment. O thou Beneficent Being

who hast with infinite goodness watched over our parents, when they were the sole inhabitants of this spacious earth, keep far from the heart of my beloved brother every baleful and tormenting passion! May the storm never return: but may tranquillity, gratitude, and joy, render every day delightful, like the past!"

Thirza, with delight in her countenance, said, "Our parents, my love, felt not more joy at the return of spring, after the rigours of the first winter, than they experienced when they saw the tears of reconciliation drop from the softened eyes of our brother. Our affectionate father, our fond mother, seemed in their transport to have recovered all the gaiety of youth, and every thing around us smiled with new joy." Thus did this amiable and virtuous pair express the sweet sensations that filled their hearts.

Mahala, Cain's spouse, observing that his brow still wore the gloom of discontent, pressed his hand to her lips, and, in a soft and tender accent, said, "Why, my love, dost thou seem so cold, so insensible, in the midst of such happiness? Is the calm that is restored to thy soul incapable of enlivening thine eye with tender joy? Cannot thy heartfelt satisfaction render thy countenance serene? I should fear the cloud of grief, that has so long darkened thy days, had rendered thee unable to taste of joy, had I not beheld—beheld with ecstatic delight, content and transport animate thine eyes, when thou gavest our brother the fraternal embrace. O my beloved! the Eternal, from his throne on high, and the benevolent angels who surround us, saw with approbation the soft sensations that then filled thine heart. Suffer me, my dearest spouse! to press thee to my bosom: let my fondness again light up joy in thy countenance. Mayest thou lose all thy cares in this sweet embrace!"

Cain resisted not the tender caresses of his spouse,

but replied, "your joy, your excessive joy, gives me offence. Yes, I am displeased. Does not your transport say, Cain is corrected? he was, before, a man vicious and wicked—he hated his brother?—I was not wicked. Whence arose so strange an idea? Must I hate my brother because I was not always weeping over him, or persecuting him with my embraces?—I never hated my brother—no, never. I saw, indeed, with pain, that he, by his softness and effeminacy, stole from me the affection of Adam and Eve.—Could I be insensible of this? But, Mahala, it is not without cause that sorrow hangs on my brow. What imprudence in our father to recount to us the history of his shameful fall, and all the disasters of which he and Eve are the cause! What need was there for us to know, and be so often told, that it was their fault that lost us all the delights of Paradise, and rendered us unhappy? Were we ignorant of this, our miseries would be more supportable, and we should not deplore the want of enjoyments of which we could then have no idea."

Mahala stifled in her heart remonstrances and complaints, and carefully read her husband's eyes, to see if she might venture a reply. Then mildly answered, "Suffer me, I conjure thee, my beloved, to weep! for I cannot restrain my tears. Suffer me to implore thee for thyself! I beseech thee to drive far from thee this gloomy melancholy that is again beginning to overcloud thy soul! Thou canst, I know, my love, thou canst disperse it, and restore to thy heart peace and serenity. Let not thy troubled imagination always present to thy view subjects of misery and grief, where thou oughtest to behold divine benignity and grace. O Cain! why should we blame our affectionate parents for relating to us the wonders God has done for fallen Man! They would excite in our souls a lively gratitude and firm confidence. They are keenly sensible of

every thing that can be a subject of pain and grief to us, and 'tis barbarity to reproach them with our misery. Rise, my love, I entreat thee ; rise superior to the vexations that would again intrude themselves into thine heart, and obscure our days with gloomy sadness !” She said no more, but gave her husband a tender glance, while her eyes swam in tears.

The smile of affection now tempered the austerity of Cain's countenance ; and he replied, as he embraced Mahala, “ I will, my dear, surmount the vexations that would gain an empire over me. I will not obscure thy days, or mine, with unavailing sorrow.”

Anamelech, one of the inferior spirits of hell, had observed the behaviour and discourse of Cain. He had seen, with malicious joy, the signs of envy and wrath in his ruffled features. This malignant demon, though of the lowest order among the rebel angels, did not yield, in pride and ambition, to Satan, the arch-apostate. Often, while in hell, he retired from his companions, whom he despised : often he remained in solitude among the infected rivers of sulphur that flowed through the burning land, or strayed alone on the enormous rocks whose summits were hid in stormy clouds. There, in secret, he repined at his ignoble indolence, while the blue flames, reflected from the tops of the mountains, cast an obscure and horrid light on the path made by his wandering feet. But when hell, with tumultuous roar, celebrated the praises and triumphs of her king, who, on his return from the terrestrial globe, elate with pride, recounted how he had seduced our general ancestors, and boasted his having forced the Eternal to pronounce against them the decree of death and wretchedness, then the black venom of Envy swelled the rancorous breast of Anamelech. “ Must Satan,” he cried to himself, “ though accursed, enjoy in hell triumphs and praise, while I, unnoticed, rove in obscurity

through the dark corners of these gloomy regions, or am confounded among the vile crowd, who, with servile shouts, aggrandize him, and hail him victor? No: I feel myself equally capable of noble daring: I will astonish my compeers: I will force hell's fierce monarch to pronounce my name with respect." Actuated by the prospect of rising to distinguished greatness among the infernals, he meditated baleful projects, and nourished in solitude inveterate hatred to the human race. His black mind formed various schemes for their destruction; and his horrid designs succeeded but too well. The miseries of Adam's offspring rendered the name of this vile demon great among the diabolical powers of the fiery deep. He it was who, after a succession of ages, incited a cruel king to massacre the infants of Bethlehem. He saw, with a malignant smile, men, barbarous as the outcasts of heaven, display a savage rage against those innocents: he received a horrid pleasure while he beheld their little limbs dashed against the stones, which their spouting veins stained with blood: he was delighted to see them stabbed and dismembered in the arms of their distracted mothers. He hovered, with cruel satisfaction, over that unfortunate city. The cries of these tender victims were to him agreeable melody. He fed, with eager joy, on the heart-rending complaints of their inconsolable mothers. The mangled limbs of infants, trampled under the feet of their savage murderers, was to him a pleasing sight: and he felt a hellish transport when he beheld their fond parents prostrate on the earth, in all the bitterness of anguish, tearing their hair, and beating their breasts, distained with the blood of their guiltless offspring.

This relentless fiend, revolving in his gloomy breast the actions of hell's fell monarch, disdained ignoble sloth. "I will ascend," said he, "I will ascend to earth. I'll know the import of the sentence, Man

shall die ! I shall accelerate his doom—I will kill. He then with hasty stride, passed through the gate of hell. He marked and trod the footsteps the arch-fiend had traced through ancient Night, and the tumultuous empire of Chaos. Thus a brigantine equipped for theft, steers with full sail through the immense sea, and stopping on the coast of Hesperia, surprises the tranquil inhabitants of some peaceful village ; seizes the active youth, while fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and inconsolable wives, lament on the shore, pursuing with weeping eyes the ravishers, who, with out-spread sails, soon escape from sight.

This detestable Anamelech long flew, with rapidity, through the gloomy empire of night, till at length he perceived a faint light on the frontier of the created universe. As a malefactor, meditating some horrid murder in the shade and silence of the night, proceeds to execute his bloody purpose, through a gloom towards the city, and finds it on all sides illuminated, is struck with fear, and would gladly hide himself from every eye ; thus the impure spirit was agitated with terror, while he traversed the immense sphere which surrounded the earth. On his arrival on this globe, his piercing eye soon discovered the abode of man ; and he alighted in the shady grove.

“ Here, then,” said he, “ dwells Man, Heaven’s new favourite. This earth is cursed, and far unlike the smiling garden where he first was placed. Delightful spot ! now guarded by the flaming sword ; for I beheld it while I hovered over the earth. This they have lost ; but what is left them is not hell. Perhaps, by plaintive supplications, they have softened the anger of their God : for, did not hell still follow me from place to place ; did I not bear within myself a hell, I might, for aught I see, be happy here ; but possibly their grosser bodies may be subject to pains, to griefs unknown to ethereal substances. Ah ! I see

some of the heavenly host placed as guardians over Man, though under malediction. I must elude their care, escape their attention, or all my designs will be rendered abortive, and I shall become the sport, rather than the admiration, of Satan, and the sycophants who surround his throne. Yonder is the family of sinners; but I see no signs of misery; their evils, perhaps, commence not till death. I'll know. If their hearts are open to seduction, I will, by my wiles, engage them in new crimes that may accelerate their punishment. Satan succeeded, by an easy artifice, with the chiefs of this family, while they were yet perfect. Now they are degraded by sin, and the curse of their God, can it be harder to subvert them? No: I shall induce them to commit actions so black, that their heavenly guardians shall quit the earth with horror; and he who created them shall, by his thunder, exterminate the ungrateful race, or precipitate them into the burning lake: then, on our scorching banks, we shall taste of joy—shall triumph, while we behold these worthy inhabitants of this new world rolling in flames of sulphur, cursing their existence, and their Almighty Maker. Ah!—I see one of them bears on his brow the marks of sullen discontent. He has a ferocity in his looks that gives me hopes. My first effort shall be on him. His companion weeps—I will learn the cause of her tears.”

The malevolent spirit, invisible to human sight, followed Cain and his spouse, meditating seduction and murder. When they were retired to their dwelling, the impure demon repeated after them, in malicious mockery, “Rise superior to the vexations that intrude themselves into thine heart! Drive far from thee these clouds of melancholy that would obscure thy days!” Then quitting irony, to give utterance to the infernal malice by which he was agitated, “No,” said he; “what is good shall never take root in thine ungrate-

ful heart: I will destroy it. These clouds of melancholy thou wouldest disperse shall be re-assembled over thy head, thick and black as those which surround with eternal darkness the summits of the infernal mountains. My task will be no hard one. Thou thyself labourest to assemble them: I have only to assist thee: it will be to me a pleasing task to second thine own efforts. Yes, I will accumulate them on thy brow: desolation and misery, yet unknown to the human race, shall find entrance among mortals: thy days shall be filled with horror and darkness; and these darlings of heaven shall taste the cup of wrath, poured forth for angels."

Cheerful dawn again began to gild the horizon, inspiring songs and gaiety, when Cain, with his instruments of husbandry, was going to the field. Abel had already given him the salute of the morning, and was conducting his flocks to pastures, still moist with the dew of the night. Mahala and Thirza were advancing, hand in hand, towards the garden which surrounded the altar. They stopped to salute their brothers, when Eve came to them from her cabin, with gestures of desperation. Both were seized with inquietude and concern, and approaching her, cried out with emotion, "O my mother! you weep!--Why weep you?" Eve, at this question, redoubled her tears; then endeavouring to stifle her grief, she, giving them a look of affection, said, while her words were interrupted by sighs, "Alas! my children, have you not heard dreadful groans come from our dwelling? The sharpest pains this night have seized your father, and he now struggles with some disease that seems to penetrate even to his bones. He endeavours to conceal his anguish: he would prevent the sighs that escape from my heart: he suppresses his complaints, and strives to console me: but, O my children! the most poignant grief has taken possession of my soul,

and my tortured heart refuses all consolation. When he reposes in most tranquillity, he seems lost in reflection : an instant after he groans with agony ; a cold sweat covers his face, and the tears he had restrained burst in a torrent from his eyes. O my dear children dreadful apprehensions oppress my heart. Support me, my daughters : support your unhappy mother, sinking under the weight of affliction. Let us go to your father." Eve, followed by her lamenting children, returned to her spouse, weeping, and leaning on the shoulder of Mahala.

Filled with sorrow, they surrounded the bed of the sick. Adam then lay tranquil. His countenance and gestures discovered that, in spite of suffering and pain, his soul was master of itself. He cast on his afflicted children a look of parental tenderness. He even gave them a smile of affection and said, "The hand of the Almighty, my beloved offspring, is on me. My entrails are torn with anguish : but, praised be the Lord, who regulates all by unerring wisdom ! Perhaps he has ordained these pains to unloose the bands that unite my soul to this frail body. If it is now to return to the dust of which it is formed, I submit. I adore the dispensations of my Maker, and wait with resignation and love, the fatal hour. I will praise thee, the Sovereign of Life and Death, till this union is dissolved ; my soul shall then, delivered from its vesture of earth, offer thee more elevated praise. O God of Consolation ! deign to be my support. Teach me to endure with patience my present pain, in firm hope of future happiness. But, above all, forsake me not, O my Maker ! forsake not an expiring sinner in the distressful hour of death ! Abandon me not, when my soul is dismayed by the last tremblings of nature."

He then cast his languid eyes on our general mother, who was weeping at his side. "And thou, Eve," said he, "whom I love as myself, and you, my dear chil-

dren, add not to my griefs by your sorrow and tears. How cruelly does your affliction distress me! Cease my beloved, cease these sighs and these lamentations. Perhaps the Lord may remove the terrors of his hand, and death may yet be at a distance. Perhaps I may again, even on earth, taste joy and gladness. I wait the good pleasure of my God, and resign myself to his will. Do you also, my dear children, and you, my tender spouse, acquiesce, with submission and devout gratitude, in the divine appointments. Accustom yourselves, before-hand, to reflect, with holy resignation, on the instant when it shall please the Almighty to strip off this garment of earth, and to take me from you." The father of mankind ceased to speak. Sharp pangs again seized him, and he could only utter sighs and groans.

When his agonies were abated, he regarded all about him with silent attention; but his looks were more particularly fixed on Eve, who seemed overwhelmed by her deep distress: her sorrows augmented those of her husband; and, to console her he again resumed his discourse: "Alas!" said he, "the death experienced by the first sinner will doubtless have something frightful in it, to those who shall behold it; but it will be more terrible still to him who shall be the victim. May that merciful God, who has never abandoned us in our distress, succour me in that dreadful hour!--He will do it!--His past mercies are pledges that he will. As for you, my children," added he, "go--leave me--resign me to the will of the Lord. Pray for me with fervour. This dreadful crisis may perhaps end in a sweet sleep, that may restore vigour to my enfeebled members."

Adam was silent. His children stooped to kiss his trembling hand, "Yes, my father, they cried, "we will prostrate ourselves before the Lord; we will supplicate that sweet repose may repair thy strength,

exhausted by suffering. O may our prayer be accepted! may the Lord remove from thee these pains by which thou art tormented!"

With hearts pierced with grief they left the cottage Eve only remained. "I would sleep," said Adam addressing himself to his wife, who sat near his bed, suffused in tears. "Why, my beloved, dost thou give way to thy grief? Thy tenderness, by increasing my pain, may chase repose far from me." At length he wrapped his face in the skins which covered him, to conceal from his companion the distress and inquietude of his mind. "Is this," said he to himself, "is this that hour so full of horror? I fear it is. Great God, how terrible!--Abandon me not, O my Maker! forsake not, in the last agony, an expiring sinner! How sweet would be my consolations, even in death, if these sufferings, these fears, would exempt my unhappy offspring from the consequences of the curse pronounced on them for my sin!--But no: the same horrors will terrify, the same veil of darkness will extend over all born of woman. From a trunk empoisoned by sin, what can be produced but sinners---sinners subject to death?---I have killed all my posterity. All, like me, must be torn from those they love---from those whose tenderness softened and endeared life, and gave it all its delights. O Eve! O spouse tender and dear! what anguish will rend thine heart! what tears wilt thou shed over my senseless dust! Frightful prospect! Will not mine inanimate clay tremble, when the orphan, left without support, shall lament the loss of its father, snatched away by death in the midst of his course? or when decrepit parents shall be deprived of their sons, who were the comfort and support of their declining age? when sisters shall water with their tears the dead bodies of their brothers, the wife that of the husband, the lover that of the object beloved? Spare then my memory, O my chil-

dren! curse not my peaceful dust. It is just that the weight of the curse fall on the last hour---the hour that tears us from this life of sin. Death, when he divides the soul from its covering of clay, will also draw it from a state of malediction. If, notwithstanding the little power its degradation has left it, it has struggled against vice, and endeavoured to raise itself to virtue, it shall enjoy never-ending happiness in the regions of immortality. Ye ought not then, O my offspring! to execrate my ashes. Our abode on earth is not properly life: 'tis but the dawn of life; a troublesome dream. Oppress me not, then, ye mountains of grief! 'Tis by dying I shall revive. I wait for that instant, firmly relying on the mercies of my God!" Such were the thoughts of Adam, when a profound sleep overpowered his senses.

Eve sat drowned in sorrow by the bed of her sleeping husband; and, in a low voice, fearing to disturb his repose, vented the anguish of her heart. "What evils do I experience!" said she. "O curse! the consequence of sin, let thy burthen rest on me! I was the first sinner. Let a double weight of woe fall on my wretched head! It is just: I was the first offender. Ah! 'tis already on me. All the griefs, all the distresses of my husband, of my unhappy offspring, flow from me. Their pains, their sorrows, are so many gnawing worms that prey on me. O my spouse! if thou diest---How I tremble at the idea! A general shivering seizes me; the cold sweat trickles down my face. Can the horrors of death be more dreadful! If thou art going to die for my fault, O Adam!--if these agonies are to unloose the bands of life, hate me not. Add not to my insupportable miseries thine anger! And ye, my children, curse not your unhappy mother! Guilty as I am, I deserve your pity. Ye upbraid me not, 'tis true, but, alas! every sigh, every tear, awakens my keen remorse, and is to me a cutting reproach.

O God Almighty ! lend an ear to my plaintive supplications, and remove his sufferings : or, if they are the forerunners of death, if his body must now return to the dust---terrifying thought ! separate us not ; let me die with him ! Suffer my soul to retire first, that I may not behold his last pangs ! I was the first sinner." Eve ceased to speak, and remained inconsolable, weeping by the side of her husband.

Cain, in spite of the roughness of his temper, had shed tears at the groans and discourse of his father. He went into the fields when he left the cottage, and thus expressed his concern : " I could not help weeping when I was near the bed of my father ; yet I hope he will not die. God grant that this good parent, whom I love, may not die ! Yes, I could not help weeping ; but yet I am not drowned in sorrow, like my brother. Before I shed tears on all occasions, I must lose my natural firmness, and become, like him, soft and effeminate. Will they still say I am of a savage disposition ? At least they will imagine that Abel loves Adam better than I, because I cannot weep like him. I love my father : he is as dear to me as to my brother ; but I cannot command my tears to flow."

Abel, penetrated with sorrow, went into his pastures. He prostrated himself on the earth ; he bent his head on the grass, which he moistened with his tears, and addressed his prayer to the Almighty :

" With the most profound humility, I would praise thee, O my God ! Thou conductest the affairs of mortals with unerring wisdom and infinite goodness. Though depressed by grief, I dare presume to offer up to thee my supplications ; for thou hast permitted the sinner to implore thy mercy : thine unmerited goodness has allowed us this sweet consolation, in the midst of the evils which surround us. I ought not, I do not hope, that thou wilt change the purposes of

thy wisdom, in compliance with the desires of a plaintive worm: thy ways, O Gracious God! are wise and good: to thy will I resign myself, supplicating only for strength to suffer, and for consolation in our pain. Thou knowest, O Omniscient God! thou knowest the desires, the ardent wishes of my soul. If these desires, if these wishes, are not contrary to the designs of thine infinite wisdom, restore us our common parent!--Restore to our afflicted mother the husband for whom she supplicates thee--restore her to him in whom her life is bound up, and whose loss would render her wretched!--Restore to us, his sorrowing children, a father tenderly beloved! Defer, O God merciful and gracious! defer, if it be thy will, his death to a more distant period. Speak, O God! and it is done; command, and it is accomplished. At thy nod our evils will disappear, and joy and gladness, thanksgivings and praise, will resound from the humble habitations of sinners. Permit him, who gave us life, to remain yet longer with us. Spare him, that he may still declare to us thine infinite bounties, and teach our infant children to lisp forth thy praise. But, if thine unerring wisdom has appointed this the time of his dissolution, be not offended, O my Maker! with this excess of our grief. If he must now die, lend him, O God of compassion! lend him thine assistance in the terrible hour of death, and mercifully forgive our cries and groans. Moderate, by thy divine consolations, our affliction, that we may not offend thee by our despair."

Such was the prayer of Abel. He was still prostrate on the earth, from which he was roused by a distant sound. Sweet odours were wafted around, and before him stood a guardian angel, resplendent in beauty. On his serene brow he wore a coronet of roses; and his smile was gracious as the opening day. He said, with a voice mild as the breath of the zephyrs, "The Lord hath lent a gracious ear, O Abel! to the

voice of thy supplications : he hath granted thee the desires of thine heart : he hath commanded me to assume a body, and to bring thee consolation and succour. The Eternal, who incessantly watches over his creatures, who regards with an eye of beneficence the crawling insect, as well as the archangel arrayed in glory, hath ordered this earth to produce, in its bosom, salutary remedies for the diseases of its inhabitants ; whose bodies, by the fall, are exposed to pain and sickness, which shall, by degrees, lead them to death and to corruption,---the sad consequences of having disobeyed their Maker. Friend, take these plants, and these flowers : they are specifics to restore health to thy father : boil them in the clear water of the fountain : let him drink, and be whole."

The angel, having given him the salutary herbs, disappeared. Struck with inexpressible astonishment, he remained some time immoveable ; then breathed the devout gratitude of his soul, in this short ejaculation : " What am I, O God ! what am I, that thou shouldest thus graciously regard my prayer ? I am but sinful dust and ashes. I would praise thee, O my God ! but thy bounties exceed all praise. The triumphant archangel cannot sufficiently exalt thy name ; yet thou hast deigned to accept the supplications of a worm."

His lively joy lent him wings. He ran to his cottage, and with eager impatience prepared the odoriferous dilution. This performed, he flew to his father. Eve was still bathed in tears, and her daughters sat pensive by her side. They saw with surprise his eagerness, the joy which sparkled in his eyes, and the smile which sat on his lips. " Dry up your tears, my beloved !" said he, as he entered. " Weep no more, O my mother ! The Lord hath heard our prayers ; he hath sent us succour. An angel hath appeared to me in the pastures : he hath given me aromatic herbs and flowers, gathered by his celestial hand. ' Boil these,

said he, 'in clear water, and restore health to thy father." They heard his words with astonishment, and rendered thanks to the Lord, with gratitude and humble confidence. The sick drank the healing draught, and soon experienced its salutary effects. Adam now raised himself on his bed, and with ardent piety offered up his adorations: then taking the hand of Abel, he pressed it to his cheek, and wetted it with tears of joy, saying, "O my son! blessed be thou---thou by whom God hath sent me succour; thou, whose virtue pleaseth the Lord; thou, whose prayer he accepts, and hath vouchsafed to answer. I again bless thee, my son---my beloved son." Eve and her daughters then embraced him by whom the Lord had sent them succour.

Cain at this instant entered the dwelling of his father. While in the field, he had been tormented with care and anxiety: "I will return," said he to himself, "I will return to my father; perhaps he needs my assistance. --Perhaps he is already dead, and I have not received a last blessing from his lips. I will hasten to him.---I love my father."

On his entering, he saw with amazement their joy. He heard Adam bless his brother. Mahala, his wife, ran to him, and embracing him, said, "The Lord, my beloved, hath sent us succour by the hand of Abel." Cain approached the bed of Adam, and kissing his hand, said, "I salute thee, O my father! Praised be God, who restores thee to our tears! But, O my father! have you no blessing for me? You have blessed my brother, by whom the Lord sent you help: bless me also---me, your first-born." Adam, giving him a look of affection, and pressing his hand between both his, said, "I give thee my blessing, O Cain! Be blessed of God, O my first-born! May the favour of the Lord rest always on thee! May thy heart enjoy tranquillity and peace, and thy soul uninterrupted repose!"

Cain then embraced his brother. How could he avoid it?—all had embraced him.

Cain left his father's dwelling; but it was to retire into the gloomy recesses of a thick grove, where, oppressed with melancholy, he repeated, after Adam, "Peace and tranquillity!--an uninterrupted repose!--How can I enjoy this tranquillity?—Where shall I find this repose? Was I not forced to petition for a blessing, while his affection made him, unasked, pour forth his soul in blessings on my happy brother? He has allowed me my rank of first-born: What advantage to me is this superiority? Misery is my inheritance; disdain my portion. It is by the hand of Abel the Lord hath restored health to our father. I am rejected. The bright messengers of heaven appear not to me: they pass me with contempt: they honour me not with their regards. While I spend my strength in the labours of the field; while the sweat drops from my face, embrowned by the scorching sun, the angels hold converse with him, whose delicate hands are unsoiled by labour; who lies idle near his flock, or, with unmanly softness, is shedding tears, because the shining dew glitters on the grass and herbage, or the setting sun tinges the clouds with purple. Happy favourite! all nature smiles on thee. I only feel the curse! I only eat my bread by the sweat of my brow. The whole weight of the divine malediction falls on my wretched head. I am, in every thing, unhappy." Thus revolving in his melancholy brain gloomy ideas, the offspring of hatred and envy, he wandered in the thick shade.

The sun was retiring behind the azure mountains, and reflected on the clouds a glowing red, when Adam said to his wife, "I will, my beloved, before the day is closed, render thanks to God, who hath restored my health." He left his bed, full of strength and vigour, and repaired, accompanied by his daughters, to

the entrance of his cottage. The departing sun diffused a mild light over the fields: Adam cast himself on his knees, and viewed with transport the country thus enlightened. "Here am I," said he, with fervent effusion of heart; "here am I, my Sovereign Master, prostrate before thy face, penetrated with a lively sense of thine infinite goodness. Ye agonizing pangs! what are become of you? Ye pierced my bones, ye scorched my vitals; yet, in the midst of anguish, my soul lost not her hope; she placed her confidence in God, and was not disappointed. The Almighty lent a gracious ear to the groans and cries of a sinner: he regarded the voice of a worm. Health returned: pain and sorrow were no more. Death shall not yet triumph over my dust: I shall still praise my Maker, in this habitation of clay, this house of corruption. I will praise thee, O my God! I will praise thee from the early dawn to the rising of the evening star. While my soul is confined in this body of earth, it shall stammer forth its gratitude; but it will praise thee in more exalted strains, when disengaged from this obstructing dust, it shall rise triumphant and refined: it shall then behold thee face, to face, arrayed in all the lustre of thy magnificence. O ye angels, resplendent in light, cast your eyes on this dwelling of sinners, this abode of death! The earth shook from its foundations when it became defiled by sin, and its Almighty Maker turned from it his regards: yet on this earth he now displays the wonders of his love. Attune your golden harps to his praise. Exalt his name in seraphic strains, while man, weak man, can only lisp his rapture. I salute thee, O sun! I salute thy retiring beams. When thy morning rays enlightened these fields, I groaned, oppressed by pain; when they illumined my dwelling, I saluted them with my sighs: ere they have given place to the grey twilight,

I am returning thanks to the Lord of Life, who hath removed my griefs. I salute you, ye lofty mountains, and ye hills scattered over the plain ! Mine eyes shall still behold, reflected from your summits, the glowing brightness of the rising and the setting sun. I salute you, O ye birds ! who chant the praises of the Eternal ! your songs shall still recreate mine ear. Ye limpid streams, I shall again repose my weary limbs on your flowery banks---again be lulled to rest by your soft murmurs ; and ye groves, ye bowers, ye woods, I shall still walk under your refreshing shades ; ye shall again shield me from the sun's too ardent ray, when, rapt in profound meditation, I shall wander in your fragrant retreats. I salute thee, O nature entire ! but I worship and adore only nature's God, who supported my vile clay, when ready to crumble into dust."

The father of men thus praised the Lord, while the whole creation appeared attentive to his prayer, and seemed to felicitate his return to life. The glorious orb of day darted on him its last rays. The young zephyrs wafted on their ambrosial wings the aromatic perfumes of the groves and gardens, as if charged by the flowers to exhale their sweets to him. The feathered inhabitants of the woods saluted him with their softest notes, as actuated by a lively joy.

Cain and Abel came under the shade while Adam was yet on his knees. They saw with delight their father restored to health. The prayer ended, Adam arose from the earth ; he embraced, and received the embraces of his transported children : he kissed, with fond affection, the moistened cheek of our general mother : after which, he, Eve, and their daughters, returned to their dwelling. Abel then addressing himself to Cain, said, " Let us also, my dear brother, render thanks to God Most High, who has restored to our tears our affectionate father. I will, by the

light of the moon, which is now rising, offer on mine altar a young lamb. Wilt thou not also, on thine altar, make an offering?"

Cain giving him a gloomy and angry look, said, "Yes, I will present an offering to the Lord of what my barren fields afford." Abel, with graceful sweetness, replied, "O my brother! the Lord our God counts as nothing the lamb which burns before him: neither doth he regard the fruits of the field which the fire consumes. 'Tis the ardent piety that flames in the heart of the worshipper, that gives the offering all its value."

Cain returned, "The fire of heaven will perhaps consume thy victim; for by thee the Lord sent health to our father.---I am disdained; however, I will make my offering. I am, as well as thee, penetrated with gratitude. Our father, who is restored to our wishes, is equally dear to me as to thee. Let the Lord do with me, miserable worm! according to his good pleasure."

Abel tenderly threw himself on the neck of Cain, saying, "Ah! my brother, my dear brother! dost thou make the Lord's having sent, by my hand, relief to our father, a new subject of discontent? I was charged with this commission for us all. All prayed to the Lord: the prayers of all were answered. Banish from thy bosom, my dear brother!--let me entreat thee to banish for ever these gloomy ideas. The Lord, who sees into the inmost recesses of our souls, can discover there unjust thoughts, and secret murmurs. Love me, as I love thee. Offer thine offering; but suffer it not to be defiled by any impure dispositions. May the Lord, O my brother! favourably accept thy praises, and graciously shed his blessings on thee!"

Cain answered not, but walked toward his field; and Abel, looking after him with a pitying eye, repaired to his pastures. Each advanced to his altar:

Abel slew a young lamb, laid it on its altar, scattered on it odoriferous herbs and flowers, and put fire to the offering ; then warmed with fervent piety, prostrated himself before it, and with humble gratitude praised the Lord. The flame arose on high through the gloom of night, and enlightened the fields and pastures. The Lord forbad the winds to blow, because the sacrifice was acceptable.

Cain laid on his altar the fruits of the field, put fire to the offering, and also prostrated himself before it. Instantly a terrific sound was heard among the bushes. A furious whirlwind advanced towards the altar, dispersed the offering of Cain, and covered him with flame and smoke. He retired trembling, when a majestic voice, proceeding from the darkness, uttered these awful words : “ Why tremblest thou ? Why is pale fear seen on thy visage ? There is yet time ; correct thyself ! Repent, and I will pardon thy sin ! If thou dost not, thy crime and its chastisement shall pursue thee for ever. Why hatest thou thy brother ? He loves thee ; he honours thee with true affection.”

Cain, seized with horror, quitted the place of sacrifice, a tempestuous wind driving after him the infected smoke of the offering. Appalled with terror, he wandered through the darkness : his heart trembled within him, and a cold sweat ran down his face. Casting his eyes around, he beheld the bright flame of his brother’s sacrifice rising in the air in spiry waves. At this view, he turned aside his head, and, gnashing his teeth, cried, “ Ah ! there’s the sacrifice of the favourite ! Fly, mine eyes, this hateful sight ! Another look would fill my soul with all the rage of the infernals. I cannot help cursing in my heart this darling of heaven, and of all nature---I cannot help cursing him with trembling lips.---But turn, unhappy wretch ! turn thy fury on thyself ! Come, O death ! O destruction, come ! and put a period to my miseries, and to

my life! Why, O my father! didst thou suffer thyself to be seduced! Why, O my mother! didst thou entail miseries on thy wretched offspring! Shall I present myself before you, in the horrors of my despair? Shall my agonies, my terrors, my insupportable wretchedness, show you the distresses your fatal lapse prepared for your descendants? Ah! no. Revenge not, unhappy man!--revenge not thyself on a father, by bringing before his eyes a spectacle of such horror! Seized with terror he would expire in my sight, and I should, if possible, be still more wretched. The wrath of the Lord lies heavy on me: he has cursed me: he disdains mine offering. I am the most desolate creature on the face of the earth. The animals of the field, the reptiles of the ground, compared with me, are worthy of envy. O merciful God! if it be possible, extend thine indulgence to me. Turn from me, O God! thy fierce anger! or again reduce me to nothing!--But what do I say? Oh! hard, obdurate heart! Correct thyself, he hath said, and I will pardon thy past offences! Choose pardon or misery!--misery eternal! misery inexpressible! Yes, I have sinned: mine iniquities rise above my head; they cry for vengeance. Thou art just, O God!--thy vengeance is also just. The farther we stray from the path of perfection and wisdom, the farther we stray from happiness. I must then be guilty, since I am unhappy. I will forsake these ways of perverseness. Turn thine eyes, O God! from my past offences! Preserve me from committing new ones! Take pity on me, O my God! or reduce me to nothing!"

BOOK IV.

MAHALA'S GRIEF DISTURBS CAIN, WHO LEAVES HIS HUT.—HE SLEEPS UNDER A BUSH.—HIS DREAM.—ABEL DISCOVERS HIM ASLEEP.—HIS IMPRECATIONS ON AWAKING.—ABEL'S EXPOSTULATIONS.—CAIN KILLS ABEL.—HIS HORROR.—EXULTATION OF ANAMELECH.—THE SPIRIT OF ABEL CONDUCTED TO HEAVEN BY AN ANGEL.—CONVERSATION OF THE SOUL WITH THE ANGEL.—ABEL'S FAREWELL TO THE EARTH.—SONG OF THE ANGELS.—CAIN'S DESPAIR.—HIS DOOM.—ADAM AND EVE DISCOVER THE DEAD BODY.—THEIR LAMENTATION.—THEY ARE COMFORTED BY AN ANGEL.—ADAM'S PRAYER.

THE air was yet moist with the dew of night; the birds still slept in silence; the sun had not begun to gild the tops of the hills, or the hovering fogs of the morning; yet Cain, distressed and melancholy, had left his cottage. Mahala, unknowing she was overheard, had wept, and prayed for him, during the tedious night. The black traces of despair were too visible in his countenance to escape the observation of this affectionate wife: she raised to Heaven her supplicating hands: she begged for him mercy and forgiveness: she entreated that the Divine consolations and grace might soothe and soften the heart of her wretched husband. Her lively grief, her intense devotion, as she feared disturbing the partner of her bed, were only uttered in sighs and tears: yet the inarticulate expressions of her sorrow had reached the ears of Cain, who, unable to bear her grief, had wandered in the early dawn: his murmuring voice resounded through the profound calm of the fields, like distant thunder. "Night odious! night horrible!" said he. "What black clouds surround me! what fears! what terrors! When my imagination began to be calmed, when gentle sleep had hushed my griefs, the voice of

lamentation awoke me. Alas ! I only wake to be replunged in wretchedness. Shall I never more enjoy repose ? Why did she pray and weep for me ? She yet knows not that my offering was rejected. Her tears increase my distress. I cannot bear her groans ; they add to my griefs ; they chase peace from my heart. This day, like the last, must be passed in sorrow and bitterness. While a smile of approbation rewards every action of my brother ; while he enjoys every soothing delight, terror and sadness pursue me. I love thee, Mahala ; I love thee tenderly : thou art dearer to me than myself. Why then shouldst thou, by thy lamentations, fill with anguish the few hours of rest my miseries have left me ?”

He stopped under a bush that grew on the side of a rock : “ O soft sleep !” said he ; “ restore me here thy balmy blessings. Unhappy that I am, weakened by fatigue and terror, I invoked thee in my cottage. Scarce hadst thou spread over me thy downy pinions, when the voice of sorrow chased thee from mine eyes. Here is none to trouble my repose, except beings inanimate, influenced by the wrath of Heaven, can drive quiet from me, even in this distant retreat. O Earth ! which, by a curse too severe, requires such painful labour—alas ! I only labour to prolong a life of wretchedness—now, at least, let me on thy bosom find some moments of rest to repair my exhausted strength : I expect no other happiness : I know no greater.” He was silent. He laid himself on the fragrant grass, and the power he had invoked wrapped him in his sable wing.

Anamelech secretly followed the steps of Cain. He was now at his side. “ A profound sleep,” said the malicious spirit, “ has closed his eyes. I will continue near him, to accomplish my purpose, and accelerate his destruction. Come, assist me, ye hovering dreams ! disturb his soul with fantastic visions : assem-

ble each image that can inspire him with fury and distraction. Come, Envy, with corrosive tooth, hot rage, and every tumultuous passion!" Thus spake the spirit impure; and, with intent malign, laid him near Cain. A furious wind arose: it howled in the caverns of the rocks; it shook with dreadful roar the bushes, and rudely agitated the hair of Cain. But in vain it howled in the caverns of the rocks; in vain it shook with dreadful roar the bushes; in vain it rudely agitated the hair of Cain: sleep sat heavy on his wearied eyelids, and he still kept them closed.

He beheld, in a dream, a vast field, on which were scattered a number of mean cottages. He saw his sons and his grandsons dispersed over the plain, where they resolutely exposed themselves to the mid-day sun, which darted his scorching rays on their heads. Assiduous at their painful labours, sometimes they gathered fruit for their subsistence; at others, prepared the earth to receive fresh seeds; or stooping, wounded their hands with pulling up the thorny brambles, lest they should choak the rising grain, and lessen the utility of their former industry. He saw also their wives busied in domestic labour: he beheld them preparing a frugal refreshment against the return of their husbands. Eliel, his eldest son, then appeared before him. He saw him lift with difficulty a heavy burthen from the earth: he bore it on his shoulders, tottering under the load: the sweat streamed from his embrowned face, and sorrow and discontent appeared in his eyes. "What a life of misery!" said Eliel. "How well is the prediction fulfilled, which said, Man shall eat his bread by the sweat of his brow! Did the Creator banish from his presence all the offspring of Adam? or did the curse affect only the children of the first-born? Too severely it is felt by us, the sons of Cain: our portion is labour and indigence; while in yonder fields inhabited by the

children of Abel, from which our unnatural kinsmen have banished us to these barren deserts, is concentrated all that can give delight to man. There the earth spontaneously pours forth her bounties. Those sons of luxury recline in fragrant bowers. Nature herself seems subservient to their ease and sloth. Every comfort, every pleasure, if pleasure is to be found on earth, is the portion of those voluptuous idlers." Thus murmuring, Eliel slowly staggered towards the cottages.

Cain was now carried on Imagination's sportive wing to a plain enamelled with a variety of flowers, watered by limpid brooks, which meandering ran, with soft murmurs, near aromatic bowers, under the shade of tufted groves. The banks were decorated with lofty trees, and the clear water reflected the vivid colours of their several fruits, formed a new landscape. The streams, after thus roving through the flowery turf, finished their wandering course in an ample lake, whose glassy surface was smooth and unruffled. He saw at a distance a citron grove, where played the wanton zephyrs, fanning with their ambrosial wings the sweets around. The prospect was terminated by a range of lofty fig-trees, which spread their extensive shade over the tender flowers. In this delightful spot were accumulated all the beauties with which imaginative fable has decorated the charming vale of Tempe, or Cnidus' luxuriant land; where rose, consecrated to Venus, a magnificent temple on lucid columns.

Cain saw in his dream flocks, white as the falling snow, sporting in the meadows, or cropping the plentiful herbage; while the indolent shepherd, whose head was encircled with a wreath of flowers, lay reclined under the spreading palm, chanting to the sympathizing object of his passion an amorous lay. There, boys blooming as the loves, and girls sweet as the graces,

assembled under arches of interwoven honeysuckles and myrtles, where with agile feet they formed the festive dance. The bright juice of the grape sparkled in golden goblets, and delicious fruits were spread on tables covered with flowers; while the ambient air resounded with vocal and instrumental harmony. Cain with regret beheld these children of dissipation. He saw a young man rise in the midst of the sportive assembly, and heard him thus address his brethren: "I rejoice with you, my jocund friends—I rejoice in our present felicity. Nature smiles on us: she has united in this delightful spot all that can charm the eye, or ravish the heart; but, to conserve her bounties, we must again return to labour, and labour is troublesome and fatiguing. Shall our hands, formed to touch the soft lute and sounding lyre, be rendered callous by the drudgery of the field? Shall our heads, which so well become these encircling roses, be again exposed to the sun's fierce rays? No: we will recline on beds of violet under the myrtle, while the hardy sons of the earth, the brawny inhabitants of yonder plain, shall for us endure the toil of labour. The men shall till our grounds; their wives and daughters shall be servants of ours. What say ye, my gay companions, is the prospect pleasing? You smile approbation. Lend me your assistance, my dear brethren, and ere to-morrow's dawn we will make it a joyful reality. When the sun has withdrawn his rays from the earth, and night has spread over it her mantle of darkness, we will march in silence to the cottages of those rustics; we shall doubtless find them, after the rugged toil of the day, buried in the arms of sleep, and shall easily take them captive. 'Tis true, our number is superior to theirs, and you may wonder that I recommend silence, and choose night for our expedition: but, my friends, the men are strong.

hardship and fatigue have braced their nerves, and despair may render them desperate. Let us then avoid a battle, in which, if victors, we must suffer some loss, and choose the least dangerous method of effecting our purpose." The young man was silent. The whole assembly were unanimous in his praises, and showed their readiness to join in the infernal scheme, by loud shouts of applause.

A new scene now struck the eyes of Cain. It was night, and the inhuman artifice was in execution. He heard cries of desolation and terror, intermingled with shouts of insult and triumph. He beheld the fields and rocks illumined by the flames of the burning cottages: by this dreadful light he saw his sons and grandsons bound, and with their wives and infants, tamely marching before the children of Abel, like a flock of bleating sheep.

Such was the dream of Cain. He was distressed, though asleep; when Abel, having perceived him under the bushes at the foot of the rock, approached, and with looks of affection, and in a voice of tenderness, said, "Ah, my brother, soon mayest thou awake! I long to embrace thee, and to express the sweet sensations by which my heart is engrossed. I love thee, my brother: I see with pain thy uneasiness, and gladly would remove from thy soul the fatal jealousy that embitters thy days. Awake, O Cain! awake, that my heart may again know the pleasures of reconciliation. But, soft, ye impatient wishes!---Breathe gentle, ye winds! Ye birds, cease your untimely melody, lest ye disturb the precious repose of my brother. Perhaps his fatigued limbs require yet longer the restorative influences of sleep.---But how he lies!--how pale!--how wan!--His features seem distorted by fury. Why do you distress him, ye visions of terror! leave his soul to enjoy tranquillity, ye imaginary horrors! Take possession of it, ye pleasing images! present to his mind

the sweet occupations of domestic life; the tender delights of the husband and father. May every thing most lovely in the creation fill his imagination, and soothe his soul! May he awake calm and smiling as the vernal morn! May joy expand his countenance, and his delighted heart utter its gratitude to the great Giver of every good, in devout praise!" He spoke no more, but stood stedfastly looking at Cain, while astonishment, inquietude, and tender love, were visible in his eyes.

As the fierce lion couching at the foot of a rock, (who, though asleep, freezes with terror the trembling traveller, and obliges him to take a wide circuit to avoid the dreadful beast,) if the murderous arrow in its rapid flight pierces his side, suddenly starts, and, with dreadful roar, seeks his enemy: he foams; he rages; his blazing eyes menace destruction: the first object he meets is the victim of his fury; perhaps an innocent child, playing on the grass with the variegated flowers:—Not less terrible rose Cain. His eyes were inflamed, and rancour sat on his pallid cheek. A storm of wrath was gathering. The cloud burst. He stamped his foot on the ground. "Open, O earth!" he cried; "open, O earth! and hide me—hide me from my miseries, in thy lowest abyss. My life is one continued round of distress and torture; and, as if this was not enough, I see—insupportable prospect!—I see that my children shall one day inherit my miseries. But I implore in vain: thou wilt not open; the Almighty avenger restrains thee. I must, such is his will—I must be wretched; and, that future evils may disturb my scanty enjoyment of present good, he himself draws aside the veil. Cursed be the hour when my mother, by my birth, gave the first proof of her sad fertility! Cursed be the place where she first felt the pangs of child-birth! May all its products perish! May he that shall sow it, lose his

grain and his labour! May sudden terror strike, even to the bones, all who shall pass over it?"

These were the imprecations of Cain; when Abel, pale as the sculptured marble, ventured to approach him with slow and unsteady step. "My brother!" said he, in a trembling voice. "No---O my God!---Horror freezes my blood. One of the seditious spirits, whom the Eternal precipitated from heaven, has surely taken his form, under which he utters his blasphemies!---Where art thou, my brother?---I fly to seek thee---to bless thee---Where art thou, my brother?"

"Here I am," cried Cain, in a voice of thunder; "here am I, thou soft favourite!---thou dear minion of the vengeful Eternal, and of all nature!---thou, whose viperous race are one day solely to engross all the felicity of this world! Yes, so it must be. It is fit there should be a tribe of slaves, as beasts of burden to the favourite lineage. Their delicate limbs must not endure the hardships of labour. Formed only for voluptuous idleness, these sons of sloth must recline in shady bowers, while---The rage of hell is in my heart---Cannot I---"

"Cain! my brother!" said Abel, interrupting him, with a voice and look that at once expressed his horror, affection, and astonishment: "What terrifying dream has troubled thy soul? I sought thee in the early dawn: I came to embrace thee at the springing day. But how do I find thee agitated! How dost thou return my tender love! When, O when, my dearest brother, shall peace, shall amity bless our dwellings? When will come the happy day---a day after which our indulgent parents so ardently long, when fraternal affection and social joy shall be firmly re-established? O Cain! Cain! canst thou so soon forget the pleasures of reconciliation, of which thou seemedst so sensible, when, in a rapture of joy and friendship, I flew into thine arms? Have I offended

thee, my brother?---unknowingly have I offended thee?---Then---But why dost thou cast on me such furious looks? By all that is sacred, I conjure thee to forget my involuntary fault, and receive my embraces!" As Abel pronounced the last words, he stooped to clasp the knees of his brother; but Cain started back, crying, "Ah! thou serpent! wouldest thou twine thyself about me?" At the same instant, with an arm strengthened by rage, he swung a massy club, and smote the head of his brother. The innocent victim of his fury fell at his feet. The bones of his head were crushed. He once raised his dying eyes to his unnatural brother, and giving him a look of pardon and pity, expired. His blood distained the waving curls of his fair hair, and ran in a stream to the feet of his murderer.

Cain stood motionless, stiffened with horror. The cold sweat ran from his trembling members, while he beheld with agony the last convulsions of his expiring brother. The smoke of the blood he had shed ascended even to him. "Cursed blow!" he cried. "My brother!---Awake, awake! O my brother! How pale!---His eyes are fixed!---The blood streams from his head!---Miserable that I was---Ah! what am I now?---Infernal horrors!--"

Thus he cried aloud, and furiously threw from him the bloody club: then with violence struck his temples. He stooped to the dead body, and endeavoured to raise it from the earth, crying, "Abel!---my brother!---awake!---Ah! what tortures do I feel!---How his head hangs!---how it bleeds!---how helpless!---Dead! O anguish insupportable! he is dead! My crime is without remedy! I fly---whither fly? My tottering knees will scarce bear me!" Having thus spoke, trembling, he hid himself among the bushes.

The seducer, with triumph in his look, remained near the dead. Elate with pride, he stretched his

DEATH OF ABEL.



*Thus he cried aloud, and furiously threw from him
the Bloody Club.*

gigantic form to its full height, and his countenance was not less dreadful than the black pillar of smoke, arising from the half-consumed lumber of a lonely cottage, is to the inhabitants, who, returning from their peaceful labours, find all their conveniences, all their riches, the prey of the devouring flames. Anamelech followed the criminal with his eyes, while a ruthless smile spoke his exultation. He then cast on the bleeding body a look of complacency. "Pleasing sight!" said he; "I see, for the first time, this earth wet with human blood. The flow of the sacred springs of heaven, before the fatal hour when the Master of the universe precipitated us from those seats of bliss, never gave me half this pleasure. Never did the harmonious harps of the archangels give me such delight, as the last sighs of a brother murdered by his brother. And thou, the noblest of thy Maker's works, thou last best effort of his creating hand, what a despicable figure dost thou now make! Rise, beautiful youth! Rise, thou friend of angels! This indolence in thine orisons ill becomes the worship of thy God! But he stirs not. His own brother has left him weltering in his blood. No, that honour is mine: I guided the arm of the fratricide. It is by action, such as Satan himself would boast, I shall rise above the vile populace of hell. I hasten to the foot of the infernal throne. The vast concave of the fiery gulph will reverberate my praises. I shall move in triumph through crowds of ignoble spirits, whom no hardy achievement has dignified, and look down with scorn on those who, till now, were accounted my equals." Inflated with arrogance, he turned once more to glut his eyes with a last view of the victim: but the hideous traces of despair instantaneously dissipated his ironic smile, and effaced the triumphant pride which sat on his expanded brow. The Lord commanded, and he was seized by infernal horrors; he was overwhelmed

by a deluge of torture. He now cursed his existence; he cursed eternity, replete with torments, and yelling fled.

The last sighs of the dying ascended to the throne of God, and demanded of Eternal Justice vengeance on the murderer. Thunder was heard from the holy sanctuary. The golden harps ceased to sound. The eternal hallelujahs were interrupted. Three times the thunder echoed through the lofty arch of heaven. This awful sound was succeeded by the majestic voice of God, issuing from the silver cloud that encompassed his throne. It summoned an archangel. The lucid spirit advanced towards the seat of the Most High, veiling his face with his effulgent wings; and God said, "Death has made his first prey on man. Henceforth be it thy function to assemble the souls of the just. I myself spoke to that of Abel when he fell. When the righteous man is languishing in the cold sweat of death, be thou at his side. By assuring him of eternal felicity, support him in those moments of anxiety, when his soul, trembling at the view of his past life, dreads a separation from its dust. Thou shalt then calm his fears, and inspire him with confidence. Thou shalt turn his eyes from my rigorous justice, and fix them on my long-suffering and tender mercies. Hasten now towards the earth, to meet the soul of Abel. Thou, Michael, go with him, and declare to the murderer the sentence pronounced against him." Thus spoke the Eternal, and again the thunder thrice echoed through the lofty arch of heaven. The archangels, with rapid wing, passed through the celestial ranks. The gates of the divine abode spontaneously opening to the heavenly messengers, they traversed the boundless expanse, on all sides resplendent, amidst suns without number, and alighted on the earth.

The angel of death called forth the soul of Abel

from the ensanguined dust. It advanced with a smile of joy. The more pure and spirituous parts of the body flew off, and mixing with the balsamic exhalations, wafted by the zephyrs from the flowers which sprung up within the compass irradiated by the angel, environed his soul, forming for it an ethereal body. It saw, with a transport till then unknown, the bright messenger coming towards it.

“ I salute thee,” said the celestial spirit, while benignity and joy beamed in his eyes : “ I salute thee, O happy soul ! now disengaged from thy encumbering dust. Receive my embraces ! It is to me an increase of felicity, that I am chosen by the Most High to introduce thee into the realms of light and bliss, where myriads of angels wait to hail thee. Conceive, if thou canst, beloved soul ! conceive what it is to behold God face to face—to have communion with him for ever. Thou art going to experience the riches of his grace, the wonders of his love. Thou wilt soon know the immense rewards with which he recompenses virtue. O thou, who hast first laid down thy covering of dust to be clothed in light, I once more embrace thee !”

“ Permit me also to embrace thee, celestial friend !” replied the soul ; and overpowered by the ecstatic sense of its beatitude, it reclined on the angel. “ Delight extreme !—bliss inexpressible ! While my soul was imprisoned in the perishing clay, from which it is now released, I meditated in solitude, by the mild and soft light of the unclouded moon, on the charms of virtue, on the glories of my God. These sublime objects, even then, elevated me above myself ; and I experienced, without knowing it, a faint dawn of the felicity I at present taste. But how much more attractive now are the charms of virtue ! How are my ideas of the Divine attributes exalted and enlarged !

What new thoughts!--What are now the beauties of spring? O sun! where is now thy dazzling lustre? The enraptured soul again embraced the angel, and continued to utter its transports. "Eternity now is mine! All sublunary cares are at an end. I shall for ever be employed in praising my God, who, with unbounded beneficence, bestows never-ending felicity on the soul that pants after virtue, and delights in the beauty of goodness. For ever shall I exalt his name; for ever shall I enjoy ineffable bliss: for I shall see him as he is."

"Thus did these two happy spirits interchange reciprocal endearments, and the sweet embrace. "Follow me, my friend," said the archangel; "follow my flight. Let us quit the earth: nothing here can now be dear to thee but the virtuous. Regret not to leave them behind; for, after a few more rising and setting suns, they too will partake of thy felicity. At present, the celestial choir waits with ardent expectation thy coming. Haste to embrace your new friends, and join with them in incessant hallelujahs to the Eternal."

"I follow thee," replied the righteous soul. "Into what a torrent of delight and felicity art thou conveying me, dear and respectable friend, whose nature is so far superior to mine! O my beloved kindred! whom I still leave embodied in dust, who must still remain in this vale of tears, when the days of your lives are fulfilled, when the hour of your dissolution is at hand, and the celestial introducer of souls shall descend to meet you, I will accompany him; for at the foot of the Almighty's throne will I beg this grace. With what joy shall I see your pure and holy souls rise from this seat of corruption, from this region of death! And thou too, Thirza, my dear and tender companion! when thou hast yet a little longer wept over my mouldering dust, and hast reared to virtue the infant that

now but begins to prattle forth its thoughts, thou must be the prey of death. What rapture, when thy soul, quitting the cold clay, shall fly into mine arms !”

Thus spake Abel, and rising in the air, began to lose sight of the earth. As his eyes were taking a last look on the dwellings whose inhabitants were still dear to him, he beheld his brother : remorse was printed on his countenance : his clenched hands were held over his head : he suddenly lifted up his eyes to heaven, then, frantic with despair, struck with repeated blows his throbbing breast : he cast himself in agony on the earth, and rolled in the dust. Tears of compassion dropped from the eyes of the happy, and he turned aside from the frightful scene. His heavenly conductor was now joined by multitudes of angels : the tutelary spirits of the earth surrounded the celestial travellers ; they congratulated the soul of Abel on its deliverance from sin and death ; they embraced him in holy rapture ; and having escorted him to the confines of the terrestrial atmosphere, they reclined on a crimson cloud, and, to the soft lute and silver harp, joined the melody of their celestial voices, chanting in chorus :

“ He rises ! the new inhabitant of heaven rises to his native land. Render him homage, ye brilliant constellations, which roll in the immensity of space ! render homage, with gladness, to the earth, your companion. What glory to that opaque sphere, to have nourished in its dust a being prepared for the joys of immortality ! Glow, ye fields, with brighter verdure ! Reflect, ye hills, a purer light !

“ He rises ! the new inhabitant of heaven rises to his native land. Legions of angels wait his arrival at the celestial portals. With what rapture will they welcome their new companion to the seats of bliss ! They will crown him with unfading roses. What will be his transport when he traverses the flowery fields

of heaven ! when, under aromatic bowers of eternal verdure, he joins the angelic choir in their song of praise ; ascribing glory, honour, power, and dominion, to the Source of happiness, the sole Principle of all good.

‘ Already have we celebrated the day when his soul descended from the hands of its Creator, and entered into its body of earth. Already, O festive day ! hast thou been celebrated, and we will still celebrate thee. We saw his young mind improve in every virtue : it hastened to maturity and strength, like the lily in the spring. We have seen, with joy, his aspirations after perfection. Invisible, we have beheld the uniformity of his life, the consistency of his actions. We have joined in his devout praises ; we have sympathized in his tender sorrow. His virtuous tears have given joy to the angels. Virtue was his motive and guide. For ever shall he enjoy the rewards of virtue.

“ He rises ! the new inhabitant of heaven rises to his native land. Receive him, ye sons of light ! crown him with celestial roses ! Honour him whom the Most High delighteth to honour ! Yonder, like a faded flower, lies the dust he has abandoned. Parent earth, receive it in thy bosom : again receive the precious dust ! Each spring it shall produce odoriferous flowers. Each year we will solemnize the day in which his righteous soul quitted the earth.”

Thus they sang ; then, borne on their lucid cloud, descended to the earth.

Cain wandered in despair among the bushes. He roved from place to place, but change of situation decreased not the horror that had lodged itself in his convulsed heart. Thus the traveller in vain quickens his pace, in vain exerts his skill and strength, to avoid an irritated serpent ; the reptile pursues him with his poisonous breath ; it encircles his limbs ; it fixes its

sting. Where shall he fly from torture? Already convulsions seize his wounded breast; the mortal poison flows to his heart. So Cain vainly strove to fly his pain. "Oh that I could no more see his streaming blood!" he cried. "I fly, but the blood follows me still---still it runs to my feet. Where shall I fly? ---Where?---miserable that I am!---His last look!---What have I done? The dreadful deed is the work of hell; I already feel its tortures! I have, with him, murdered his unborn offspring.---Ah! what noise is that among the bushes? Why sighs the dead?---Away; haste, feet, far away from the pursuing blood; far away from the dreadful sight of death!---Drag me away, ye trembling knees, sprinkled with a brother's blood to hell!" At these words he walked with fast and unequal steps.

A black cloud alighted at his feet, from the midst of which issued an awful voice, saying, "Cain, where is thy brother?"---"I know not---me miserable!---Am I my brother's keeper?" answered he, stammering and retreating back, pale as the lifeless corpse of Abel. Loud thunders now burst from the cloud; the grass and bushes blazed around him, and Michael the archangel stood before him, arrayed in terror. On his majestic brow were imprinted the menaces of the Lord. In his right hand he held the forked lightning, and extended his left over the appalled sinner. He spoke, and it again thundered. "Stop, trembler; hear thy sentence: Thus saith the Lord, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me. Thou art cursed on the earth, which hath drank the blood of thy brother, shed by thy hand: to thee it shall be for ever barren, and thou shalt be a vagabond on its surface." The terrified sinner was mute and immoveable: his head bent, and his eyes fixed on the ground, while his heart was torn with anguish, like that of the impious atheist, when God, terrible in

judgment, shakes the earth, and he sees the profaned temples and the sumptuous palaces of sinners shake to their foundations, and fall into ruins; while his ears are terrified with the groans of the dying, the sobs of grief, and the shrieks of despair. In this convulsion of nature, thick smoke and flames burst from the cleft earth. Wild with horror, he attempts to fly: he staggers on the tremulous ground: he reels; he falls. Equal terror shook the fratricide. He attempted to speak; but only inarticulate stammerings came from his lips, while dread still kept his eyes fixed on the earth. At length he cried, in a voice that spoke his anguish, "My crime is too great—ah! much too great, ever to be forgiven! Now, O inexorable God! thou hast cursed me on the earth, and—Where can I hide myself from thy presence!--Banished from society—a vagabond—the first who meets me shall slay me, and rid the earth of an infamous murderer."

"A vengeance seven-fold more dreadful than thine, shall fall on him who sheds thy blood;" said the angel, speaking again in thunder. "Dark disquietude and gnawing remorse are strongly imprinted on thy brow. By these marks shalt thou be known, and all, on seeing thee, shall quit the path made by thy wandering feet, crying, There goes Cain, the murderer!" The angel, having thus announced the divine anathema, disappeared. Thunder again issued from the rising cloud, a dreadful whirlwind tore up by the roots the trees and bushes, with a noise that resembled the howlings of a malefactor suffering under the agonies of penal torture.

Cain stood motionless. Despair glared in his eyes; yet fierceness was still seen in his bushy brows. The furious winds shook his erect hair. Wild fear, at length, forced from his livid and quivering lips these horrid accents: "Why has he not annihilated me? Wherefore not annihilated me, that no traces of me

might remain in the creation? Why was I not blasted by his lightnings? Why did not his thunders strike me to the depths of the earth.---But his ire reserves me for perpetual sufferings---torments without end! Deserted by my fellow-creatures; all nature abhors me; I abhor myself. Already the attendants on guilt haunt me; shame, remorse, despair. Shut out from human society, banish'd from God, I shall, while on earth, feel the torments of hell---I feel them now. Cursed be thou, O arm, which so hastily executed the impulses of passion! mayest thou wither on my body, like the blighted limb of a tree! Cursed be the hour when a dream from hell deceived me; and thou, infernal fiend, who suggested it! Where art thou now, that I may curse thee? Art thou returned to hell? Mayest thou there feel incessantly what I now feel! Nothing worse can I wish thee. 'This is your triumph, ye spirits of darkness! Gaze on, ye devils, and wonder at my misery!' Spent with agony, he sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, and remained without strength or voice, motionless as the dead. Then starting he cried, "Ha! what noise is that? It is the voice of murdered Abel!--He groans---I see his streaming blood! O my brother! my brother! in pity to my inexpressible anguish, cease to haunt me!" He now continued sitting in speechless agony, sighs only bursting from his tortured heart.

In the mean time, the father of mankind, with his amiable spouse, having left their cottage, came forth to enjoy the fragrance and beauty of the early day. "With what majesty does the sun dart his first rays!" cried Eve. "How they gild the flimsy mist that hovers over yonder field! how charming the appearance of the country! Let us walk on, Adam, amid the dew, till the hour of labour calls thee to the field, and me to our dwelling. O my beloved! this earth is still lovely. See, Adam, how all the creatures rejoice.

each bush, each eminence pours forth its melody. The beasts, too, how they frisk and bound, and chase each other! with what gaiety and life they welcome the morning rays!"

Adam answered, "Yes, my love, the earth is still beautiful; it still bears visible marks of the presence of God, and of his infinite goodness, which our folly and ingratitude have not yet been able to exhaust. Yes, his mercy, his munificence, exceed the power of words to express; are too great for the rejoiced heart to conceive. Let us hasten, Eve, through those flowery fields, to the smiling pastures where Abel feeds his flock. Perhaps we may find that amiable, that dutiful son, chanting his morning hymn, and, in devout melody, praising his Creator."

"Dear Adam," returned Eve, "let us first go to the field of Cain. I have in this basket brought a little present for my first-born. I have culled out some of the best of my figs, and a few bunches of my finest dried grapes. They will be an agreeable refreshment for him, when at mid-day he retires to the shade, faint and fatigued with labour. Let us go to him first, my spouse; for fain would I erase from his mind the idea that he is not beloved by us with the same affection that we love his brother."

"How attentive, my dearest, is thy tenderness!" replied Adam; "I will accompany thee with joy to the field of Cain. Let us carry him thy present, that he may not say all our concern and love are lavished on Abel. May the serenity of this delightful morning dispose his heart to the impressions of tenderness!" They now redoubled their pace, and walked towards the open country. "How happy," said Eve, as she was going on, "how happy should I think myself, if, when nature thus smiles, and awakens every sentiment of tenderness and joy, our first-born receives us with affection! if his heart is open to the soft sensations of filial love!"

They now came from behind some bushes, Eve walking a little before, when suddenly stepping back, she cried, with a tremulous voice “Who lies there?—Adam, who’s that lies there?—He lieth not like one asleep; his face is on the ground.—Those golden locks are Abel’s.—Adam, why do I tremble?—Abel! Abel! awake, awake, my son! turn to me thy face—turn to me thy face! Awake, ah! awake, dear son, from a sleep that freezes me with terror!” They approached nearer. “What do I see!” cried Adam, trembling, and retiring back. “Blood! blood trickling from his temples! His head is covered with blood!”—“O Abel! O my son!—my son!—my dear son!” cried Eve, lifting up his arm, stiffened by death; then sunk, pale as the object she lamented, on Adam’s throbbing breast. Horror and grief deprived them both of voice; when Cain, frantic with despair, came without design to the place where lay the dead body of his brother, and seeing near the corpse his father motionless, and his mother pale and lifeless in his arms, he cried out, trembling, “He is dead!—I killed him!—Cursed be the hour, O father of men! when thou begattest me! And thou, woman! cursed be the instant when thou broughtest me forth!—He is dead!—I killed him!” repeated he, and fled.

Two lovers, united by a sense of their mutual perfections, enjoying sweet converse, sit near each other. A tempest suddenly rises: the subtle lightnings dart; the blue flame quivers over their heads. Each strives to succour each; alas! in vain: embracing still, they living seem, though void of life. Thus our first parents sat pale and silent, without sign of life, except an universal trembling. Adam first recovered from his lethargy of stupid grief. “Where am I?” he cried, in broken accents! “How I tremble!—My God! my God!—Ah, there he lies!—Wretched father!—What horrors shake my soul:—How can I support the

dreadful thought!--His brother killed him! He has cursed us!--O Abel! O my son! My veins are chilled; my blood runs cold. Ah, miserable parent! One son has cursed thee; the other lays before thee, imbrued in his own blood. What evils, what torments, have I brought on myself, and my wretched offspring!--Ah, fatal sin!--And thou, too, Eve, thou awakest not!--How my terrors increase! Art thou dead too?--Am I left alone, a prey to anguish?--Yet, O God, in the midst of desolation, I adore thy decrees, I revere thy justice: I am a sinner.--An icy coldness insinuates itself into my beating heart: my eyes fail. O death! why delayest thou? O Abel! O my dear son!" He then again cast a look on the body: the tears flowed down his venerable face, and with them ran the cold sweat. "Thou at last awakest, dear Eve," he continued: "but, alas! to what inexpressible tortures dost thou awake! Ah! what distress is seen in thy weeping eyes, dear companion of my misery!"

"Adam," replied Eve, in a fearful accent, "is the murderer gone? The voice of cursing thunders no more; I no longer hear the voice of his cursing. Curse me, me alone, barbarous fratricide! I was the first sinner. O my child!--my child!--O Abel, my dearest son!" She now sunk from the arms of Adam on the dead. "My son! my son!" she cried, speaking to the insensible clay: "thine eyes are fixed: no more they turn on me.--Awake, awake!--Alas! I call in vain: he is dead!--That is death--the death with which we were threatened, when cursed by God after the fall. O insufferable torment!--I was the first sinner!--O my husband! spouse beloved and dear!--thy tears rend my heart. It was I that seduced thee. Of me--of me, O weeping father! demand thy son's blood!--of me your brother, my wretched children!--Me--me curse, murderer of brothers! but spare your father--I was the first sinner! O my son! my son!"

thy blood rises against me!--it accuses me, unhappy parent!" Thus lamented the mother of the human race, while her tears streamed on the congealing blood.

Adam cast on his wife looks full of tenderness and grief. "Dear Eve," said he, "what exquisite pangs thou givest my bursting heart! Cease, I entreat thee, cease thus to torment me! I conjure thee, by our miseries, by our tender love, I conjure thee to cease thus reproaching thyself! We both have sinned; we both are guilty. The bitter consequences of our crimes are but too sad remembrances of our ingratitude and folly. But the Almighty, whom we have offended, the God who chastises us, still regards us with a pitying eye. Yes, my God! we are yet allowed to supplicate thee in our distress. Thou hast not utterly destroyed the sinner. We yet live, Eve, and our souls are out of the reach of death. It can only strip us of this body, subject to pain and grief. Our immortal souls will, if we are virtuous, triumph over death, and enjoy permanent felicity in the realms of happiness and glory, where we shall behold the light of God's countenance, and incessantly praise him to all eternity. This, my beloved, ought to be our consolation, our great consolation: but--his murderer is his brother! Ah! my first-born killed his brother!"

"Yes, dear son!" cried Eve, her tears still flowing; "death has delivered thee from solicitude, pain, and grief. Thou art no more exposed to suffer. We should wish to follow thee. Alas! we must still endure tribulations and inquietudes, from which thou art now exempt. But can I cease to weep, while I remember thy virtue, thy piety, thy filial love? O Adam! what a sight of horror is now that precious body! Where are those smiles, the sweet emanations of filial tenderness, that used to be seen on his countenance? How faded, how livid are his bloody cheeks!"

We shall no more hear from those lips seraphic harmony! no more have our souls raised to God by his angelic converse! no more will they express the endearing sensations of his heart!—Those eyes, now fixed in death, with what delight and transport have I seen them shed tears of joy, when I have given him signs of the love—the inexpressible love that warmed my heart, charmed with his spotless virtue! Ah, my son! thy weeping mother must for ever deplore thy death. O sin, sin, dreadful are thy inroads? what hideous forms dost thou assume! Abel, dear Abel! I, thy mother, thine unhappy mother—exquisite woe!—am also the mother of thy murderer!” Here her speech again failing, she remained motionless on the cold corpse, void of sensation: when Adam, with a deep sigh, cried, “How am I abandoned! All around me is a gloomy desert. Nature seems to have changed her face. No longer she smiles on me. Alas! he is dead!—he who filled my life with soft consolation, sweet pleasure, and gladdening hope, is no more! Dear Abel! is it true that thou art dead? Is it—can it be true, that it was Cain, that horror of nature! who—O God! thou beholdest our extreme desolation! Oh! pardon, pardon our lamentations! Forgive us, that we lie mourning in the dust like a worm! And what are we more in thy sight? Pardon us, though we mourn in the dust like the trampled worm, half crushed by the heedless foot of the passenger.”

Adam now stood pale and silent, as the statue of Grief on a mossy tomb surrounded with funeral cypress. At length he turned to the body of his murdered son, and stooping to Eve, gently withdrew her feeble hand from the corpse, and pressed it with ardour to his breast. “Eve, my dear companion, awake!” said he, hanging over her: “Awake, dear spouse, awake! Turn thy looks on me! Cease to wash with thy tears the insensible dust! Sink not thus under

the weight of thy grief! Has thy sorrow for thy son stifled all tenderness, all concern for me, thine husband? Turn, dear spouse, turn thy looks on me! It is just that we should feel, keenly feel our loss; that the horrors of death should terrify us; that we should mourn the fatal consequences of our sin: but to be thus overcome by grief, thus overpowered by dejection, is criminal. It is as if we reproached Eternal Justice, as punishing with too much severity. O Eve! give not way to this culpable despair, lest Divine Mercy, irritated by our obstinacy, should deem us unworthy of consolation." Eve immediately turned her face from the body towards Adam, and, raising her humid eyes to heaven said, "Forgive, O God! forgive my grief! pardon my tears! Do you, my dearest spouse, my love, my life, forgive my sorrow! My distress is beyond all words! yet thou still lovest me---me who seduced thee to commit the crime we now deplore. Thou hatest me not, though this frightful murder of one of thy sons by the other is the result of my transgression. Ah, Adam! let me weep in thine arms; let me once more weep on my child's body, and mingle my tears with his blood." She then pressed her face, bedewed with tears, on Adam's hand.

Thus grieved and lamented the parents of the human race over the first dead; when Adam, casting his dejected eyes around, beheld at a distance one of the celestial messengers: the fragrant flowers which sprung up at each step indicated the light vestiges of his feet. His serene brow announced peace: consolation, amity, and affection smiled on his lips and cheeks; and the sweetness of his eyes spoke sympathizing complacency. A white vesture, brighter than the clouds which surround the nocturnal planet, fluttered in waving folds on his beauteous form. The angel advanced towards them, while his presence seemed to enliven with fresher verdure the smiling

country. "Eve," said the father of men, "raise thine eyes, dry thy tears, suppress thy sighs! behold, one of the children of heaven is coming to comfort us. See with what graceful benignity he approaches! Already a ray of divine consolation has darted into my benighted soul: already my heart has lost part of the oppressive load under which it groaned. I acquiesce, O my God! in thine appointments: I adore thy judgments: with gratitude and love I acknowledge thy mercies. Weep no more, Eve! Rise! let us meet the friendly angel."

Eve, supported by her spouse, arose, and the bright spirit stood before them. He regarded with attention the first prey of death; but soon turned his eyes on Adam and Eve, whose faces now reflected the luminous brightness of the angel; and in a sweet and harmonious voice, said, "Be blessed, O ye who are weeping over the spoils of death in your son! May ye be blessed! The Most High hath permitted me to visit you in your affliction. Among the angels who are commissioned to watch over and guard the inhabitants of this earth, none loved Abel more than I. I was constantly near him, when the orders of the Eternal did not oblige me to be absent. When his exalted soul, inflamed with the love of virtue, vented its rapturous sensations in tears of holy joy, or in devout hymns, which the tutelar spirits disdained not to repeat in their concerts, I inspired him with such ideas of his future felicity as it was possible he could be susceptible of, while united to his dust. Weep not for him; mourn not for him, like the children of despair! He is happy: his immortal soul survives. Let this soften your grief. Death has only detached it from a weak and frail body. Without interruption or incumbrance, he now enjoys whatever can delight a wise and good being. His happiness far exceeds all you can imagine. while you only see through the

dark medium of the senses. He is with the angels and archangels before the throne of God. Yet, weep, my friends! he well deserved your love. Lament your loss; but let his unspeakable gain soon dry your tears. You are not separated for ever. Soon shall the angel of death visit you also; soon will you be united to your beloved son, to part no more. The pale King of Terrors will assume to each of you a different form; but you will receive him as becomes the candidate for future happiness, and welcome him as a friend long expected. Listen, O Adam! to the order of thy God: Restore this corruptible body to its origin, the dust; dig a pit; cover it with earth." Thus spake the angel, while benevolence and pity appeared in every look, and every gesture. Desolation fled: Despair was no more. Thus the pure water of a limpid spring refreshes the spent traveller, who, having long trod the scorching sands of the desert, pants with thirst, and fainting under the sun's too ardent rays, is sinking to the earth: but no sooner has he drank the crystalline draught, than he rests his fatigued limbs in peace on the brink, and feels a fresh recruit of strength: he rises with new vigour, and following the stream's murmuring course through a fertile country, at length arrives at some hospitable mansion, whose friendly proprietor entertains him with generous munificence, under embowering shades.

Adam, whose soul was calmed and revived by noble and elevated sentiments, viewing the dazzling lustre of the angel, as he withdrew, said, "Accept of our grateful thanks, celestial friend! Praised, praised for ever be thy name, O God Most High! thy loving kindness, thy tender mercies are not withdrawn from the sinner. Thou with compassion dost behold our distress: thou commandest thine angels to enlighten our souls, and bring us comfort. No longer will we mourn in the dust! no longer will we

despair, like the spirits of darkness, who are banished from thine all-enlivening presence. We are still surrounded by thy bounties; still permitted to praise thee, to supplicate thy favour, to adore thy wisdom, to celebrate thy goodness. Thus ennobled, shall we repine and murmur at thy dispensations, if the thorns and briars of affliction are scattered in the way of our pilgrimage to the bosom of our Father, the dwelling of our God? We cannot, indeed, entirely restrain our tears for the happy deceased: we must regret for his being thus suddenly snatched from our embraces: but, alas! the unhappy criminal ought rather to be the object of our grief, the subject of our most earnest prayers. O God! what an alleviation would it be to our sorrows, if we dared to hope that thy mercy had not cast him off for ever! O my Maker! he unhappy, he miserable, is the first fruit of my loins, the first whom Eve brought forth with pain.---Let us not cease, my dearest spouse, to implore the tender mercies of our God for him. We will not doubt his loving-kindness: we ourselves were sinners; we were unworthy of his infinite grace; yet he has encouraged us to confide in his promises. When, all trembling, we expected eternal chastisement, little did we hope for mercy.---But let us not defer to execute the command of the Lord. I will carry this dear body to our dwelling, and there commit the precious dust to the earth."

"O Adam! O my love!" returned Eve; "my soul emerges from overwhelming sorrow. Conscious of my own weakness, I support myself by thy strength, as the flexible ivy clings to the firm oak."

Adam now, by the assistance of his weeping spouse, lifted the corpse on his shoulders; and, sighing under the sad burden, slowly moved towards his dwelling, while Eve walked weeping by his side

BOOK V

THIRZA AND MAHALA'S CONVERSATION.—THEY MEET ADAM CARRYING THE DEAD BODY OF ABEL.—THEIR GRIEF AND LAMENTATIONS.—JOSIAH AND ELIEL, CAIN'S CHILDREN.—BURIAL OF ABEL.—ADAM'S PRAYER ON THE OCCASION.—REMORSE OF CAIN.—THIRZA'S NOCTURNAL VISIT TO ABEL'S GRAVE.—HER LAMENTATIONS OVERHEARD BY CAIN.—HE VISITS HIS FAMILY WITH THE INTENTION OF LEAVING THEM FOR EVER.—MAHALA RESOLUTELY ACCOMPANIES HIM.

NOW Thirza, whose sleep had been disturbed by terrifying visions, opened her eyes to the bright luminary of day, and precipitately quitted her bed. So leaps up the affrighted traveller, who, when spent with fatigue, had laid himself down under the shelter of a rock, when a terrifying dream, suggested by his guardian angel, represents to him the rock falling over his head. trembling, he hastens from the dangerous spot: an instant after the huge mass falls with hideous noise: he seeks the companion of his toilsome journey; but, alas! he is crushed under the ruins:—Not less agitated was the wife of Abel. “What frightful images,” said she, “have passed before me while I slept! They resembled nothing in nature. Welcome, cheerful light! thou hast scattered them. Hail, ye glowing flowers, sweet objects of my attentive care! your various odours, which the morning sun draws forth, will refresh my fatigued brain: and, ye joyous inhabitants of the air, your soft melody will re-establish serenity in my soul. I will join your morning song. I will join with re-animated nature in praises to the Most High. Creator Almighty! Saviour Propitious! my soul, overpowered by thy goodness, can but imperfectly express the immensity of thy benefits,

and the extent of its gratitude. Thy ever-waking Providence guards thy creatures, when, covered by the veil of night, sleep weighs down their eyelids. May my grateful thanks arise to thee, O God ! Accept from a feeble worm the tribute of praise."

She now left her dwelling, and walked among the opening flowers, whose first sweets were diffused by the morning breeze. "My heart still throbs," said she: "still anxiety is lodged in my breast. What means these unusual fears! an interior trembling seems to shake my very soul. My mind is darkened like the heavens, when black clouds spread through the expanse. Where art thou, Abel! where art thou, my beloved? Dearest half of myself! I haste, pursued by gloomy terrors, to lose them in thine arms. I fly to thee with the speed thou wouldest fly, if, benighted in a dark forest, thy feet were winged with fear."

Having thus spoke, she redoubled her pace; when Mahala seeing her, ran from her cottage to meet her. "I salute thee, my dear sister," she cried: "Whither art thou going in such haste, with thine hair disordered, without ornament, not so much as one flower?"--"I go," replied Thirza, "to throw myself in the arms of my beloved. Unusual terrors have this night disturbed my sleep, and my labouring heart is still oppressed by sad apprehensions, which the serenity of this delightful morning is not able to disperse. But though the blooming day, though the smiles of nature cannot dispel my fears, I shall lose them in the gladdening presence of my husband! I therefore run to cast myself in his arms."

The spouse of Cain replied, with a sigh, "Happy, happy sister! alas! I have no such sweet resource: I should be lost to all consolation, were it not for a father who loves me, and a tender mother to whom I am dear; were it not for thee, my kind sister, and thine amiable husband. Yes, with you I lose part of

the load of woe that Cain's discontent heaps on my wretched head. To him, unhappy! all the beauties of nature are only the sources of melancholy; and he continually regrets the labour which his fertile fields so abundantly repay. But, my dearest Thirza, above all, I lament his unkind and causeless dislike to our gentle brother." Mahala now melted into tears; Thirza wept also, and tenderly embracing her, replied, "Penetrated by the same idea, Abel and I spend many anxious hours in bewailing his inveterate hatred. Our resource is in the hand of Heaven. Often, in sleepless nights, we send our most fervent petitions to God, that a beam of his grace may disperse the dark clouds from his breast; that every baneful weed may be rooted out from his heart, lest they choak all principles of humanity and virtue. Ah, my sister! was thy husband kind and gentle, again would peace smile; again would pleasures bless our dwellings; and we should no longer with pain behold the brow of our venerable father wrinkled by care, nor the eyes of our fond mother swelled with weeping."

Mahala, still in tears, answered, "This, this also is the subject of my incessant prayer. When the earth is covered with darkness, while all nature is hushed, I bewail in silence the harsh obduracy of my spouse, and pray to the Lord to soften his heart. Sometimes the agony of my soul bursts forth, in spite of myself, in sobs and groans. Then he awakes, and, in a terrifying voice, accuses me of depriving him of sleep, and the only good he enjoys in this wretched earth, so severely accursed by the Almighty Avenger of sin. My dearest sister! this, too, is the employment of my mind, while my hands are busied in domestic labour. My innocent children, playing round me, observe my tears, and demand, with infantine caresses, why I weep? Ah Thirza! Thirza! I am faded by grief, like a young flower, when the thick branches of some

neighbouring tree intercept from it the sun's all-cheering rays. My unhappy husband, this very day, left our dwelling before the dawn. His looks were terrible. Never did I see so dark a gloom on his countenance. Anger flashed from his eyes: his brows were knit by rage. Frozen with horror, I heard him, as he went forth, curse the hour of his birth. This, my sister, was the salute to so fine a morning. 'Tis true, I have not lost all hope: for sometimes (and thou thyself hast observed it) his virtue breaks through the gloom, and his mind is open to the soft sensations of social love. Then he acknowledges that he has injured us, asks forgiveness, and seeks reconciliation. But, alas! too soon the light withdraws: as, in the tempestuous days of winter, the sun darts a cheering ray, and is instantly hid from our eyes by the closing clouds. Let us hope, Thirza, that, as mild spring restores light and joy to all nature, so the heart of my unhappy husband may be restored to light and peace. For this we will incessantly petition Heaven. I have always nourished this hope in the bottom of my heart.

Thus spake Mahala: when Thirza, pale and trembling cried, "What mournful sound is that?---It comes from yonder trees---It is not the cry of pain---from yonder trees---O my sister!---Mahala!---alas! it comes nearer.---O my God!" Thirza was now sinking to the ground, but her alarmed sister supported her in her arms.

Adam, with tottering steps, was coming from behind the trees, bending under the sad load of his son's lifeless body. Eve walked by his side: sometimes she turned her face, faded by grief, towards the bloody corpse, then hid it under her hair, dropping with her tears.

Thirza continued pale and motionless in the trembling arms of Mahala who was herself ready to sink

under the weight of her she endeavoured to sustain. Thus three amiable virgins (but none ever felt such fond affection) in a summer's eve walk hand in hand over the variegated fields: sudden the thunder roars; the rapid lightning tears the earth under their feet: terrified, they fall; but soon recovering from their surprise, two of them rise; the third a cinder. The survivors are struck with new horror, more dreadful than that caused by the thunder.

This was the situation of the two daughters of Adam; when, a little recovering, they beheld the corpse of him they loved. The afflicted father had laid it on the grass, and was supporting in his arms his fainting wife, who, weakened by grief, was near falling to the earth. "Where am I?" cried Thirza. "O my God! where am I?---How he lies!--Abel!--Why did I awake? Hateful light! Ah! unhappy that I am!--Mahala!--Ah me miserable!--See, see, my sister, he lies dead!--Sight horrible!--Light hateful!--Why did I awake?"

"Thirza," cried Mahala, in a tremulous voice, "let us not give way to vain terrors! To me, to me also, the idea is dreadful as the forked lightning.--Ah, she again faints!--Awake, Thirza, awake!--Let us go to him: he is not dead! Thy voice, thine embraces will rouse him from sleep."

After these words, the two sisters, leaning on each other, dragged their enfeebled limbs towards the body. "Oh! my father! O my mother! how they weep! what dreadful terrors seize me!" cried Thirza, as she approached near the corpse. "Abel!--Abel!--my beloved!--my joy!--my life!--my husband!--awake. Ah! unutterable woe, he awakes not!--Abel! hear my plaintive cries, the groans of thy distressed wife!" She then cast herself on the body, to embrace it with extended arms: but, at the sight of the blood and fatal wound, she, giving a terrifying shriek, fell on the

earth, without voice, motion, or sign of life, pale and cold as him she mourned. Despair was seen in her open and fixed eyes. Near her sat on the earth Mahala, dissolved in tears; wringing her hands, she sometimes raised her weeping eyes to Heaven; sometimes she fixed them with eager attention on the bloody corpse.

Adam, whose deep grief was augmented by the sorrow of his daughters, essayed to console them: "O my dear children! O Thirza! O Mahala:" said he; "would to God that my anguish could keep from pain the hearts of those I love! But, my beloved, hear me; listen to the soft sounds of consolations! While Eve and I were weeping over this dear body, an angel, replete in beauty, came to us. He was commissioned from the Most High to sooth our sorrows. 'Weep not!' said he; 'be comforted! He whom you lament still exists. He has only left this frail covering of dust. Disengaged from a mortal body, his soul is more happy than ye can conceive, while your souls are enveloped in their earthly covering. Ye are not separated for ever: in a little time ye shall be reunited; ye shall enjoy with him torrents of delight, of which your gross senses can give you no idea.' Let us not, my Thirza, let us not, Mahala, profane the funeral of the happy by our inconsolable lamentations! Let us not offend the Almighty by our despair!"

Thirza still remained without sense or motion; while the wife of Cain, elevating her joined hands above her head, thus expressed her grief: "O my father! why do you blame our tears? Can we forbear to weep, can we forbear to lament, while he lies before our eyes, extended, cold, and dead? O thou, our consolation! our joy! O Abel! thou art lost to us, and our sweetest employment will be to weep for thee till the hour of death. Yes, thou art in the possession of never-ending happiness and glory! thou enjoyest that

beatitude after which thy holy soul so ardently panted: thou wilt for ever join with the angels in their song of praise to the Most High. We, too, hope to partake of thy felicity, when our All-merciful God shall call us from our sad exile, this house of sorrow, rendered more desolate by thy loss. Ah, Abel! ah, my brother! thou art lost to us, and our sweetest employment will be to weep for thee till the wished-for hour of death. Where wert thou, Cain, my spouse, where wert thou when my brother died? Hadst thou even then given him the fraternal embrace, and sought his forgiveness, with what affection would he have cast his weak arms around thee! Though expiring, he would have blessed thee, and implored for thee the Divine consolations with his dying lips. What a sweet relief would this remembrance have been to thy sorrows! How would it have softened the griefs of thy future days! But---O my mother! what new woe makes thy eyes stream?---O my father! speak---speak, I conjure thee!---Why this horror on thy countenance?---No answer!---O my tortured heart!---Where---say where, O my father!---say, O my mother! where is Cain, my husband?"

Eve replied, "O my child! who knows where, pursued by Divine vengeance. Ah, my God! the unhappy---but what do I say?---I tremble to speak it!---He---he---Ah me! unhappy mother!---Horrid, detestable ideas, tear not thus my wretched bosom! Ah, miserable parent that I am! why---he---"---"Ah, my mother;" interrupted Mahala, "spare me not---spare me not, I conjure thee, O my mother! On me---on me let the tempests fall; I am already crushed; already torn by frightful apprehensions. Cain---O heavens! Cain has---"---"Killed him!" cried Eve. "Ah, Mahala! Ah, Thirza! Cain killed him!" Her excessive grief then took from her the power of speech.

Mahala was struck mute with terror. Her immove-

able eyes shed no tears. The cold sweat trickled down her pale face, and her trembling lips were discoloured. At length she cried out in agony, "He kill Abel!—Cain, my husband, kill his brother!—Where art thou, fratricide? Where—where, oh! where has thy guilt pursued thee? Has the thunder of God avenged thy brother?—Dost thou cease to exist? Where art thou, most miserable? To what country of despair art thou fled, followed by the curse of God?" Thus raved Mahala, tearing her hair.

"Barbarous fratricide! Vile murderer!" exclaimed Thirza; how couldst thou kill so kind a brother? who doubtless, when expiring under the mortal blow, given by thy cruel hand, regarded thee with eyes full of love?—Ah, Cain! cursed—cursed be—"O my sister! O Thirza!" cried Mahala, interrupting her. "curse him not! He is thy brother!—he is my husband! Rather let us implore for him the mercies of God. I am sure, when falling in his blood, the holy victim of his fury cast on him an eye of compassion! and I doubt not but he now intercedes for him before the eternal throne. Let our prayers ascend from the dust, and join those of the happy. O curse him not, Thirza! curse not thy brother!"

"Whither doth the excess of my grief transport me?" answered Thirza. "I did not curse him, my sister: I have not cursed the unhappy." Then reclining on the corpse, she kissed the blood-besprinkled cheeks, the cold and livid lips. She remained long silent, indulging fruitless sorrow. At length she cried, with a faint and interrupted voice, "Would to God, my beloved, I had, at thy death, kissed thy quivering lips; heard the last expressions of thy love; seen thy last tender look, and received thy last embrace!—O that I had then expired within thine arms!—but, alas! I am left a prey to unutterable sorrow. Every object

that used to inspire delight will now increase my woes. Ye shady bowers, ye are now desolate: ye can now only inspire me with terror: I shall think you ask for him, who, in your sweet retreats, was wont to embrace me in tender rapture. The murmuring fountains will inquire what is become of my beloved. Left forlorn, I can taste no more joy. The shades, the streams, the hills, the plains, alike to me are hateful. Alas! no more I see, with fond delight, him that made all lovely. I shall, indeed, still behold him! but, oh! distressing object! I shall behold these wan cheeks, these fixed and sightless eyes, this clotted blood, this dreadful wound. Flow, flow, my tears! for ever flow on this pale face. What dignity once appeared on this faded countenance! The charms of soft persuasion dwelt on these cold and stiffened lips. Every beauty, every grace, shone in his lovely form: but his soul, too pure, too holy to converse with mortals, to converse with me, is fled for ever! Stream, my eyes; stream without ceasing, on this withered corpse, till my longing soul leaves its dust with his."

Thus lamented Thirza, while her tears ran on the senseless body. Eve's grief was increased by the sorrows of her daughters. "My dearest children," she cried, "cease, I entreat you, cease thus to tear my heart! Your tears, your sighs and groans augment my miseries; they are to me the most cutting reproaches. 'Tis I---'tis I that have filled the souls of those I love with anguish! My folly, my guilt has undone us all! I, alas! introduced sin and death! Forgive me, O my children! forgive your afflicted mother! I conjure you, by the pangs I suffered to bring you into the world, to forgive me! Cease to tear my heart by your immoderate sorrow!" Mahala and Thirza ran to her; they embraced her knees, and, with looks of duteous affection, said, "O our mother! our dearest mother! who brought us forth with pain! whose kind cares guarded

us in helpless infancy ! aggravate not our distress by thy despair ! We meant not by our complaints to reproach thee, our dear, our tender mother. We love, we reverence, we honour thee, but we cannot command our grief ; it will burst from our bosoms and eyes in sighs and tears. How can we restrain these expressions of a love the most tender ? They are the voice of nature."

They still clasped their mother's knees, while their weeping eyes were tenderly fixed on her's ; when Adam said, " O my beloved ! let us no longer defer restoring this precious dust to the earth, as the Lord our God hath commanded. The lenient hand of Time will abate our grief, and dry our tears. Victorious Reason will teach us to conquer this unavailing sorrow. We shall long, ardently long, to partake of his happiness, as the bride wishes for the day that it is to unite her to her beloved."—" Yes, commit this dear body to its parent earth," replied Thirza, turning her pale and faded face to Adam : " but suffer me, O my father ! to weep a little longer, ere it is hid for ever, on the dear, the precious dust ! Suffer me once more to press the cold clay to my breast !" At these words, she threw herself with extended arms on the corpse.

Adam now began to dig a pit in the earth, while Eve and Mahala stood weeping near him ; when the golden-haired Eliel and little Josiah, Cain's two infant sons, approached, hand in hand, to the spot where lay the body. " Brother---Josiah," said Eliel, " who's that sobs so loud ? Let's go nearer, brother.---Ah ! that's Abel !---'tis Abel, our uncle ! How pale he is !---His hair is all bloody !---He lies like a lamb going to be burnt on the altar !"---" My dear Eliel ! replied Josiah, " see how Thirza weeps for him !---He don't mind her tears !---He don't look at her !---I tremble--I am frightened--let us run to our mother.---See, see, she---she weeps too !" They now hastened to Mahala,

on the other side of the grave, and clinging about her, said, "O mother! why do you weep? Why does Abel lie there? Why is he all bloody, like a lamb for the sacrifice!" Mahala tenderly embraced the infants, while her tears ran on their little heads; and said, "My dear children! Death has taken his soul from the body. It is carried up to heaven, to dwell there with God and his angels, where it will be for ever happy."—"Then he will wake no more," replied Eliel, bursting into tears: "he will never awake!!--never! he that loved us so dearly, and used to set us on his knee, and tell Josiah and me such fine stories about God, the angels, and the wonders of nature. Ah! brother---ah Josiah! we shall never more hear Abel sing hymns! He will talk to us no more!--He will never, never awake! How our father will weep for him, when he comes from the field!--How pale! how frightful!" The terrified children now hid their faces in the folds of their mother's vestment.

Adam having finished digging the grave, "Wake thou!" said he to Thirza: "wake, my beloved! Let us obey the Divine command, and return the dust to its mother earth. Wake, my Thirza!" he continued, and tenderly took her hand to raise her from the corpse. She had been in a kind of trance on the body of her husband, and now waked from the holy vision. "Yes, I have seen him!--I have seen him!" she cried, as she arose. "He came to me shining in celestial lustre. 'Weep not!' he said! 'weep not, my dearest Thirza I am happy. Soon shalt thou partake my bliss in the abodes of felicity and glory, where there is no death to separate us.' At these words he disappeared, having cast on me a divine smile; and an heavenly light marked the traces of his feet." Thus she spoke, and consolation sublime illumined her visage. "Inter, O my father! inter," said she, "this covering of dust:" and immediately went to her mother and

sister. They all three hid their faces under their dishevelled tresses, while Adam wrapped in skins the body of his son. He laid it in a pit, and covered it with earth; and then said, "Let us, my dear wife! let us, my beloved children! adore the Most High, before this grave of the first dead." They now all prostrated themselves before the grave, little Eliel and his brother kneeling on each side their mother; and the father of men pronounced in a loud voice this prayer, with his arms devoutly folded on his breast:

"O thou, who dwellest in the highest heaven, God! Creator! Justice Eternal! Goodness Infinite! behold us prostrate before the grave of our beloved son. We sinners kneel before thee in the dust. O may our prayer ascend to thy celestial throne! Look with an eye of compassion on us, O God! in this valley of death, this abode of sin. Our iniquities are great, but thine infinite goodness is still greater. We are polluted in thy sight: thou beholdest our impurities, yet thou hast not turned thy face from us: thou still vouchsafest to look on us in our misery with a propitious eye: thou permittest us to implore thee: thou hast not abandoned the sinner. Eternal praises rise to thee! Thy works, O God, render thee praise! The beauties of the spring, the serenity of the heavens, show forth thy beneficence: the loud voice of thy thunder, the rattling hail, the howling storm, proclaim thy power. Smiling joy glorifies thee: thy justice is also glorified by the tears of sorrow. We have beheld the son of Sin, frightful Death. He is come to our dwelling in a form most hideous. Guilt led him by the hand; the earth groaned, and black tempests gathered round the direful pair. The first fruit of my loins---ah! I tremble!--my first-born has imbrued his hands in his brother's blood! O God! merciful and gracious! though I presume to supplicate thee for him, turn not thy face. O God of Clemency, cas-

him not off for ever ! When he mourns in the dust for his offences ; when he trembles at his crime ; when, overwhelmed by torturing remorse, he weeps, he groans, and prostrates himself with deep contrition before thee, O my God ! look with a pitying eye on his misery ; commiserate his despair, and assuage his anguish by thy divine consolations. O my Maker ! cast him not off for ever ! Reject not, O God ! reject not the presumptuous petition ! May our prayers, our cries, ascend to thy sublime throne, from this grave of the first dead ! We have, according to thy command, restored the perishing dust to the earth. Hear us, Lord ! Lord, hear us ! while we cry unto thee in behalf of our first-born. Let him not perish in thy wrath ! For this grace, O God ! we will supplicate thee at the rising and setting sun : in the silent hours of night, when all nature is hushed to rest, we will implore thee for him. O God of Consolation ; cast him not off for ever ! Eternal praises be rendered to thee, who hast received the soul of the happy deceased into the regions of never-ending felicity ! Death has seized his first victim. We shall follow one after another to the dark and silent grave ; but, adored be thy loving-kindness, adored be thy tender mercies, we shall likewise follow him to the realms of immortality and bliss. O thou, who created the heavens ! at whose word this world arose from nothing ! they shall perish ; the heavens and the earth shall pass away ; but thou art eternal. We dwell in bodies of dust. This dust shall be dissolved ; but thou art unchangeable, and wilt raise to glory the sinner who deploras his crimes, and the righteous man who mourns that his virtues are mixed with imperfections, and his highest attainments sullied by human frailty. Thou wilt gather them together out of the dust, to bestow on them eternal joys, angelic purity ; for—O promise ineffable ! the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

Leap for joy, O earth! chant forth the praises of the Most High, all nature! We will glorify his name in the midst of calamity. Man is fallen • he is degraded from his original dignity: but, glory be to God, he hath not cast him off; he hath not rejected him for ever: his mercy beholds the work of his hands from his seat of judgment. He fell, whom God created upright; yet when, after his fatal transgression, the sinner, full of anguish, stood trembling in fearful expectation of an eternal curse, (and what less could he expect?) then—let men and angels celebrate the glorious mystery---then the Almighty pronounced, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Mystery sublime! mystery profound! wrapped in an holy obscurity, which no finite being can penetrate; but full of divine consolations. The sinner is reconciled to God! the offender is restored to peace and hope. Shall man then lament in the dust? Shall he groan in despair, if the dream of life be alternately filled with joy and sorrow? Death approaches; it shall break the shackles of the soul, and free it from the consequences of a just malediction. Then those who, while clothed in dust, forgot not their original purity, who loved virtue, who loved God, who kindled in their hearts the seraphic flame, shall be assembled together in the mansions on high, to enjoy their incessant, eternal felicity.---I see them! the holy assembly are present to my view, numerous beyond computing, pure as the flame which descends on the sacred altar; they stand, surrounded by angels, before the throne. They behold the face of God: they delight in his goodness. Beatific vision. transporting prospect! How is my soul raised! how is my heart expanded! Raptures before unknown! O goodness infinite! grace inexpressible! lost in thine immensity, the first archangel can but imperfectly express his sensations: man can only feel them."

Adam ceased to speak, but continued in silent ecstasy prostrate on the earth, his wife and daughters still kneeling at his side. Nature herself observed the same silence ; all was serene ; not a cloud passed over them through the lucid sky.

Now came on mild evening clad in sober grey, while every breeze was hushed. During this perfect calm, Cain, pursued by guilt, was agitated with fear, horror, remorse, and sad dismay. He roved from place to place : he wandered in the deserts, till spent with fatigue, he sat down facing the rising moon ; and thus the voice of his despair disturbed the peaceful silence that reigned over all nature : " There, beyond the dark hill, the moon begins her course, spreading around a faint light. All under the starry expanse imbibe new life from invigorating sleep : man only wakes. My accursed hand has driven from his dwelling peace and rest. The voice of grief and lamentation ascend from the cottages. 'Tis I, 'tis I, miserable ! that have brought affliction to their abodes. The cries, the groans of my bewailing parents, rise to heaven as so many accusations against me. This day, this accursed day !---Hear it, O moon ! turn pale, and hide thy beams ! hear it, ye stars, and set in darkness ! This day the earth has drank the blood of the first slain, shed by my unnatural hand. Henceforth withhold from me your precious influences, bright luminaries ! Cursed on the ground I tread, banished from the cheerful face of man, hide me---hide me in gloomy darkness ! I have shed my brother's blood ! I have torn the heart of him that begat me ! I have filled with despair the breast of her who brought me forth and nourished my infancy ! Hide me from the eyes of nature ! I have trampled on her dictates. I will fly---fly with my misery, sad companion ! to some desert region, where no human foot has marked the faded

grass. I will dwell among rocks and precipices, where putrid water trickles in tears from the steeps into the swampy abodes of loathsome reptiles; where birds of prey build their nests; where savage beasts devour their bloody carnage. Alas! even these will abhor me: they kill no brothers! Shade me, darkness, from the cheering sky! shade me, some horrid gloom, from the sight of every creature! There let me lament my cruelty; there howl out my despair. When sleep overcomes me, terrors will present themselves to my imagination: I shall behold my murdered brother! I shall see his wounded head! his clotted blood!"

Thus Cain bewailed his wretchedness. He ceased, and sat abandoned to mute grief. No bird of night disturbed the awful stillness; frightened by sounds of human woe, they had fled in silence: a gentle murmur only floated through the air. Again he vents his sorrows, and casting his melancholy eyes around, he cries, "Pity me, ye woods; weep for me, ye fields! No words can describe my misery; and pity is due to misery. O nature, arrayed in beauty! grieve for me—for me, **lost** to beauty, and to happiness. Mourn for me, each creature! ye taste, ye feel the efficacious presence of a gracious God, to me no longer gracious! I feel his wrath; I tremble at his power. He is to me only God the Avenger, the just Avenger of my brother's blood. For ever **will** it cry against me: my punishment is endless."

He was now silent for some moments: then, with a deep sigh, he said, "I weep: Can such a wretch as I shed tears? Welcome, precious drops! ye attest to me that my miseries are softened. The despair which had seized my soul is changed to plaintive grief, to weeping sorrow. Ah! flow my tears! Receive them, O earth! I am cursed on thy surface! thou hast drank my brother's blood; yet, O receive these tears, that show my unspeakable distress!--What new emo-

tions!--How is my heart softened! My tears flow faster. Yes, I will--yes, while darkness hides me from every eye, I will away to the dwellings of my afflicted parents, to poor Thirza. I will go to all, and once more see them--once more bless them---Bless them! the angry winds would disperse the salutations, as they came from my polluted lips. Ah, fratricide! canst thou pronounce a blessing, thyself accursed? I will, however, go and strive to bless them in their grief. I will weep before them, and in the dust deplore my guilt; and then---yes, then I fly for ever from their reproaching eyes. Fly from thee, Mahala! I fly for ever from my children!" Here his agony stifled his words, and he moved towards the cottages, watering with his tears the solitary way.

He was now passing a little grove, planted by the hand of Abel near the spring. Cain then remembered that his brother, when he had completed this work, had said, with fond affection, "Flourish, ye trees! spread wide your branches! May ye for ever bloom, that under your refreshing shade our descendants may, in affectionate converse, relate to their offspring what they will learn from us, saying, Here Eve brought forth her first-born! Here she soothed with her caresses his infant cries; him, the first solace in her sad exile: here she viewed him with inexpressible rapture. She called him Cain, saying, From the hand of the Lord have I received thee." The murderer passed by this monument of his brother's tenderness with quickened step: a remorseful sweat covered his averted face: his trembling knees could scarce sustain his weight. Thus at the sight of his father's grave trembles the parricide, who, with murderous dissimulation, had invited the good old man, returning from the field, to refresh himself with impoisoned viands: when he passes the tomb, the rustling of the trees which surround it, the odours of the garlands, with

which his duteous sisters have crowned the urn, raise a storm in his guilty heart.

Now Cain had passed the terrifying grove, and drew near the cottages. The pale moon shed on them a feeble light through the trees, and melancholy silence reigned around. He cast on the dwelling his weeping eyes; he raised his hands to heaven; he wrung them in speechless agony. Conscious guilt tore his now softened heart. Trembling, he stood amidst the dreary stillness. At length he uttered, in a low voice, this impassioned soliloquy: "How quiet deep affliction rests here!--Ah, that murmur!--Are they not sighs? They came from the cottages--from the dwellings come those piercing ejaculations of sleepless grief!--Here, here, ye once cheerful mansions, here, trembling in darkness, stands the wretch who has made you the abodes of sorrow: here, pursued by infernal horrors, shudders in obscurity he who was chased from the habitations of those who gave him life, peace, joy, and every domestic sweet. Dare I breathe the air through which ascends the sighs of my mourning parents, my terrified wife, my widowed sister? Dare I appear in a spot consecrated to just grief--grief for my crime? Be gone! pollute not the residence of virtue! Yes, I go, I go far from you; but let my eyes, haggared with despair, yet a little longer behold your dwelling. In pity to my unspeakable anguish, allow me to weep here yet a little longer. Suffer me to raise to heaven my bloody hands for your happiness. Then I go--Hail, hail, ye---Ah! wretch, wilt thou profane their sacred names? Wilt thou pollute with thy infected breath, titles that express the softest ties, the most exalted sensations of the human heart? O that, with the gloom of night, your distress, your terrors might leave you, to dwell in my wretched bosom, fit companions in my wanderings on an earth whose curse I have increased! O that I alone could endure the punishment due to my

crime! May your memories never be disturbed by my horrid image! O that I myself could lose all remembrance of myself! Dreadful wish of extreme desolation!"

Cain having thus spoke, remained still near the cottages. He groaned; he raised his eyes to heaven; when he heard the footsteps of one advancing slowly through the gloom. A cold shivering, like the agonies of death, seized his limbs. He strove to fly; but in vain he strove: he sunk down, trembling, without strength, among the bushes.

Thirza, this first night of her sad widowhood, unable to sleep, had quitted her lonely bed. She left her cottage, and went to the grave of her husband, where, seating herself on the damp grass, she wept among the clods. She viewed with fixed eyes the starry firmament; then turning to the grave said, "Here lies all that made life desirable: all my repose, all my joy lies under this earth, which now imbibes my tears. Sleep has forsaken my wearied eyelids: no rest remains for me. Flow on, flow, my tears, ye are my sole consolation: my melancholy hours shall be spent in bewailing thy loss, my dearest husband!--shall be spent near thy precious remains in gloomy sadness! 'Tis true, I have seen thee; I have seen my beloved arrayed in heavenly glory; but, ah! I am deprived of his sweet society, of his tenderness, his endearing care, through the remainder of a life of calamity and wretchedness. In vain I tried to rest on the conjugal couch: my spirits forsook me; I almost fainted, while the sweet pledge of our love lay by me, locked in the arms of sleep. The little innocent smiled in his guiltless slumbers. Alas! he knows not yet the woes of mortals; he knows not yet his own irreparable loss! Ah, my infant! I deplore thy misfortune; for ever deprived of a tender father, an instructor of thy childhood, a guide to thy youth, and the friend of thy riper

years. Thy wretched mother, a prey to keen distress, torn by heart-piercing anguish, will want the strength, will want the wisdom to supply thy loss. O my child, how are we bereaved! How is every comfort ravished from us!--Horrid reflection!--ravished from us by the hand of a brother! Where is he? Where is the miserable? Where has his remorse--where has his despair driven him? O thou, Infinite Clemency! God Propitious! despise not my supplications; turn not from my prayer, while, with unwearied fervour, I entreat thee for him. Hear him, O God of Grace and Consolation! when he cries to thee from the dust---when, in deep penitence and sincere contrition of heart, he bewails his crime, and implores thy mercy."

Her agony of soul now stopped her voice: but soon she cried, as she raised her weeping eyes to heaven, "Bright star of night, often hast thou been witness of our chaste endearments, when thy soft light illumined our path. Often hast thou been witness to his sublime converse, when he described the charms of virtue; the delights of an approving conscience. Thou now canst only shed thy beams on his silent grave. Buried in this dust lies every human excellence: the consolation, the hope, the joy of his weeping parents! Here sleeps, to wake no more, my love, my life, my husband!" She now continued long silent, abandoned to speechless grief. At length, surveying the objects round her, she fixed her melancholy eyes on the fragrant enclosure, where she and her dear companion used to pass their most delightful hours. "Ah! lovely bower!" she cried; "thou now art solitary. In vain the pale moon pierces thy aromatic shades. There, dear departed Abel! the ruddy evening saw thee pour forth thy soul in holy rapture. The remembrance of thine intense devotion, thy fervent piety, thy humble love, has lighted up in my heart a

sacred fervour. I will rise above this grief. The darkness of my soul is dispelled by the dear remembrance, as the rising moon chases from the horizon the gloom of night. O my beloved! in yonder sweet retreat, how has devotion animated thine eyes! How wert thou raised above mortality, when thou, in the joyful exultation of thine heart, saidst, 'What an happiness is it, my dearest Thirza, to be virtuous! What a privilege to be permitted to supplicate, to love him, from whom all these beauties are but emanations! What unspeakable felicity, to be conscious that the angels who surround us approve our actions! What, my beloved wife,' he added, taking my hand, 'what delight is there in this beautiful creation that can be compared to the constant assurance of the Divine presence? to the consciousness of virtue? To him who departed not from his integrity, who panteth after perfection, death itself has lost many of its terrors. We know---let the sinner exult in the inexpressible mercy!--we know that it will only separate the body from the immortal soul, which, when escaped from its prison of earth, will wing its way to mansions of eternal joy. O my Thirza!' continued the departed saint, 'if I quit my dust before thee--before thee remove to bliss, short and moderate be thy grief: weep not long over my perishing clay. What are the days of this short life, compared with eternity? We shall meet again in the realms of purity and joy, to part no more.'---'Dearest Abel!' I replied, while my tears flowed, 'neither, if I first leave my dust, do thou give way to fruitless sorrow: shed not many tears over my senseless corpse. We shall, my love, be re-united; we shall together enjoy everlasting happiness: we shall meet, O ecstasy! never, never to part more!' O my soul; sink not under thy grief! Sublime are the consolations offered thee. Remember thy dignity; reflect on thine immortality; look beyond

the present calamity; rejoice in the salvation that awaits thee! Didst thou perish with the frail body, where would be my hope? What could assuage my sorrow? Well might I lament over this grave; well might I pray that an end were put to my wretched being: but, I shall live for ever! I will rise above the dispiriting grief. Yes, my dearest husband! if thy ennobled soul, if thy angelic mind still retains any love, any concern for my happiness, thou wilt be pleased to know that thy precepts, thine example, has inspired me with fortitude---has taught me to bear up under the unavoidable afflictions of mortality. Dear angel! if thou still hoverest over me, thou shalt be witness to my endeavours to repel this fruitless grief: but my tears still flow: I cannot yet command my sorrow. I must a little longer weep on this precious dust. I will erect around the grave an arbour of cypress: under the melancholy shade I will mourn my loss; but under it too will I contemplate, in holy transport, on the happy moment when I shall meet my beloved; when, like him, I shall be free from all impurity, all sorrow, all sin, and eternally out of the reach of death. This ravishing prospect will, it does, abate my anguish." She now rose from the grave, but instantly cried, sinking again on her knees, "O horrid reflection! our brother murdered him! O God of Goodness! hear my supplications: show favour to the unhappy sinner; hear him when he cries to thee: destroy him not, O God, in thy wrath. Save him, O gracious God! save him from eternal perdition. My petitions for his final happiness shall ascend to thee in the early dawn. I will pray for him without ceasing. He is still my brother."

Cain, the prey of wild despair, lay trembling among the bushes. "Fly!" he cried to himself, "fly, these holy dwellings, odious monster!--Ah! I cannot fly: I am surrounded by infernal horrors. Leave me,

furies, leave me!—Carry me, trembling feet, from this seat of virtue I profane the sacred place. Alas! I cannot fly: my strength fails: a cold shivering has seized my limbs. O that these were the last tremblings of nature! Unhappy that I am, I survive to feel increasing anguish. How her lamentations pierce my soul! O virtue, how sublime are thy consolations!—all lost, for ever lost to me. No hope remains; I have sinned beyond forgiveness!—Ah! she prays! she prays for me; for me, who have filled her heart with sorrow!—Unexampled goodness! Ought she not rather to call down curses on my guilty head?—O torture. her virtue, her piety, heightens my despair! My miseries are insupportable. My crime appears in all its magnitude. Not the apostate spirits in the lowest abyss of hell feel more horror.—Thou pray for me, Thirza! Thy rash vows are all superfluous—No, God will not hear thy prayers; he is just.—Now she retires from the grave of her husband, murdered by my hand. Dare I tread the same path?—Dare I weep on the traces made by her feet?—No—Retire, barbarous fratricide!—Retire, bloody murderer! from the sanctified spot!—Fly, wretch! fly!

Having thus spoke, he walked with hasty step; but suddenly stopping, he cried, “O Mahala! how can I leave thee!—How can I leave ye for ever, O my children! I will in the dust deplore my crime before you—before thee, Mahala. Perhaps thou now sheddest tears of compassion for my misery; perhaps thou wilt bless me still.—But what do I say! Cursed of God, who will dare to bless me?—No, hate me, curse me! I deserve it: then I fly, abhorred of all, loaded with the curse of God, and of all nature. Misery extreme! anguish insupportable! I have no power to fly! I come, I come, my dearest wife! to mourn before thee my guilt and wretchedness. I will weep at thy feet; I will implore thee to forgive my having chased peace

from thine heart, and filled thy days with sorrow. Then---yes, then---I fly from thee, Mahala; I fly from you, my children."

Cain now passed at a distance from the grave, and advanced towards his cottage. He frequently stopped, as irresolute. At length he came to his dwelling; but stood long without, pale and trembling. Then, with tottering and hesitating step, he passed the threshold.

Mahala was sitting on her solitary bed, gazing with weeping eyes at the pale moon, more pale herself than that star when enveloped in clouds. Her infants were crying round her. At the sight of her husband she gave a heart-piercing shriek, and fell on the bed senseless. The terrified infants grasped the knees of Cain, crying, "O my father! help our dear mother! She is faint; she is sick with weeping for Abel. He is dead!--Adam has put him in the ground, and covered him with dust. Why was you so long a coming home? You have worked a long while. Dear father, comfort our mother!" Overcome by the conflict of his various passions, Cain could give no answer to the little innocents. He embraced them; he hugged them in his arms, while his tears ran on their faces. Then, unable to support his anguish, he fell on the earth, at the feet of his wife. The children now redoubled their cries, which awakened Mahala from her swoon. She saw her weeping husband on the earth. "O Cain! Cain!" she cried, in a voice of despair, tearing her dishevelled locks. "Mahala," interrupted Cain, "my dear Mahala! forgive me; pardon the murderer of thy brother! This once allow me to weep before thee; this once let me cast myself in the dust at thy feet! Ah! I conjure thee to grant me this feeble consolation, this last hope of a misery that has no equal; only abstain from cursing me. Curse me not, O Mahala! I come to deplore before

thee my misery and my guilt : then I fly far from thee for ever. I will hide me in the deserts. Cursed of God, followed by his wrath, I fly. O curse me not : curse not thy wretched husband !”

“ Ah, Cain !” she replied, penetrated with the tenderest compassion, “ though thou hast killed the best of brothers, though thou hast heaped inexpressible miseries on my wretched head, yet I forget not that thou art still my husband. I pity, I weep for thee.” Cain answered, casting on her a look of tenderness, a look that expressed the bitter anguish of his heart, “ Fatal moment, when a dream from hell deceived me. These little ones appeared before me as slaves to the sons of Abel. To save them from misery and bondage, I killed him---cursed moment ! I murdered the best of brothers, and the bloody deed will for ever haunt my mind, and fill it with infernal horrors. My punishment is eternal. Yet, O Mahala ! I would escape thy curses. Curse me not, my dearest wife !---Curse me not in my misery ! This hour I fly---I quit thee for ever---I quit ye for ever, my beloved children ! I fly from ye, cursed by God and man.”

The children lamented round him. They raised their innocent hands in agony. Mahala sunk on the earth, and reclined on her husband. “ Receive these tears, receive these expressions of my sincere forgiveness and compassion !” she said, while she wept over him. “ Dost thou fly, Cain ? Dost thou fly to the desert regions ? How can I dwell here, while thou art solitary and abandoned, while thou art miserable, far from me !---No, Cain, I fly with thee. How can I suffer thee to be destitute of all relief in the deserts ! what cruel inquietudes would torment me ! Every breeze I heard would fill me with terror. Perhaps he is now, I should say to myself, perhaps he is at this instant in the agonies of death, without succour, in

some barren wild!" She was silent; and Cain, with a look of astonishment, cried, "What do I hear! Is it thou, Mahala? Is it thou thyself, or does a dream again deceive me? It is, it is my dear, my virtuous wife! Thy words, Mahala, thy consolating words have softened my despair. Thou dost not hate me! Thou dost not curse me! It is enough. No, thou courageous, thou affectionate wife! thou shalt never share in the punishment due to my horrid crime; thou shalt not suffer for me the chastisements of Heaven. Remain in this abode, sanctified by virtue, where dwelleth the Divine benediction. I will not render thee miserable! Forget me, Mahala! forget thy wretched husband. Abandoned by God, I shall wander without place of rest: but mayest thou be happy! mayest thou be blessed!"—"No, Cain, if thou art miserable, I cannot here be happy," replied Mahala. "I fly with thee; with thee I wander: I will be desolate with thee: I go with thee to the desert regions. Our children shall go with us. I will there share thy misery; I will try to assuage it; I will mix my tears of compassion with thy tears of penitence: I will kneel by thy side. My prayers shall ascend to Heaven with thine. Our children, prostrate around us, shall join their voices with ours. God will not disdain the penitent sinner. I fly with thee, Cain. Without ceasing we will pray; without ceasing we will mourn before God, till a ray of his grace illumines thy benighted soul, and justifies our confidence in his mercy. Hope in God, Cain! He will hear the prayer of the penitent sinner."—"O thou?" cried Cain, "by what name shall I call thee? Thou art to me as a gracious angel! A beam of divine consolation has darted into the obscurity of my soul! O Mahala! O my wife! now I dare embrace thee. O that I could make thee sensible of what I feel! but words cannot express my

gratitude, cannot express the tender emotions of my heart." At these words he pressed her to his breast; then, suddenly quitting her, he embraced his children: but soon returned to his wife, and again clasped her to his heart.

Now this tender mother, this heroic wife, soothed her infants, and wiped away their tears. She took her youngest child to her breast; another little one held by the hand of his father; while Eliel and Josiah, full of life and gaiety, tripped before them. They left their cottage. Mahala, with weeping eyes, beheld the dwellings of her parents and of Thirza. "Be blessed, be blessed," said she, "O desolate family, whom I abandon! Soon will I return from the place of our habitation, to supplicate your blessings for me—for my dear, my penitent husband. I will solicit for him a pardon." She now wept as irresolute; when instantly exhalations, more balsamic than are breathed from all the flowers of spring, surrounded the fugitives, and the voice of an invisible angel, from over their heads, said, "Go, generous wife! I will in a dream inform thy tender mother of thine heroic courage! I will tell her, thou art gone with thy penitent husband, to implore mercy for him from the Sovereign Judge." They now walked by the light of one nocturnal star. They lost sight of the dwellings, and advanced into the desert regions, where had never been imprinted the foot of man.

THE
DEATH OF CAIN:

In Five Books.

AFTER THE MANNER OF THE DEATH OF ABEL.

BY A LADY.

INTRODUCTION

THE history of Cain is a loud admonition to all, to watch over their hearts, and carefully to guard against the first emotions to envy, anger, hatred, contempt, malice, or revenge. And the words of Jesus Christ confirm and enforce the solemn warning: "I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without ■ cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say unto his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matt. v. 22--24.)

THE
DEATH OF CAIN.

BOOK I.

INVOCATION.—THE SUBJECT PROPOSED.—CAIN'S DEPARTURE.—50.
LILLOQUY OF CAIN.—HIS AGONY.—ADDRESS OF MAHALA TO CAIN.
—AN ANGEL APPEARS TO THEM.—HIS ADDRESS TO CAIN.—HIS
DEPARTURE.—DESCRIPTION OF MORNING.—CONVERSATION OF
CAIN AND MAHALA.—FRUITLESS SEARCH FOR THEIR OFFSPRING.—
TEMPEST DESCRIBED.—THEY REACH THEIR DESTINED PLACE.

“RISE, towering muse, on eagles' wings sublime.”
thine be the task to celebrate him, who in his fury
sacrificed his brother---and mingled his blood with the
dust of the earth.---The first-born of men---the gift of
the Supreme---the marked of God---the deluded of the
malignant enemy of our race---even Cain ! it is he, of
whom my enthusiastic muse would sing, and for which
purpose I invoke thy aid, celestial Wisdom ! Be thou
my guide---may thy pure rays illuminate my course,---
that, whether my winged imagination take her flight
and explore the heights of heaven---or hell---Prudence
may still direct her steps.---Be present, O thou celestial
director ! let nothing receive a lasting impression with-
out thy approbation---nor thou, benign Virtue, refuse
to aid my plan---it is thy sentiments alone that can
win upon the soul ; it is to thee the wise will only
yield ;---thy guidance is security, and thy approbation
the will of the Most High. And, while my venturous
muse essays to sing the fatal consequences that flowed
from the fall of the first-born of men, may the sons of

Adam favourably receive this feeble offering of his melancholy song.

'Twas now the solemn hour of night, and nature, exhausted by the ardours of the meridian sun, had now sunk to rest;---thrice had the midnight cock essayed to wind his shrill pipe, but as oft wanted the sonorous sound of uttering voice;---the melancholy bird of dark retreat, the owl, had, with affrighted screech, returned to her murky haunt;---the wolves, tigers, lions, and all the fierce inhabitants of the forest, were prowling through the gloomy shades of wooded copse, seeking their sustenance amongst the defenceless brood of sleeping creatures. In this dismal hour of awful darkness, the devouring animals shrunk into their retreats,---the pale lamp of the moon seemed to be suddenly extinguished;---the murmuring brooks forgot their sounding falls, and, silent, trickled through their furrowed paths:---all nature now was wrapt in solemn silence, not a breeze disturbed the leafy arbours of the groves---and deep Melancholy alone had domain at this sable hour of sadness;---the twinkling of the nocturnal star was now so faint as only to give direction towards the east---when Cain and his faithful spouse, accompanied by their little ones, journeyed, "through desert regions, where had never been imprinted the foot of man."---

Behold the fugitives of sin---the votaries of oppressing sorrow!---directed only by the glimmering of a star,---a faint resemblance of light. The most wretched of beings deliberately following the footsteps of his affectionate wife and tender offspring: whilst they escaped the hooks of thorny furze, the son of guilt and shame, with frightful hauntings of terror, horror, and wild dismay, was torn by every extending branch of thorny substance, and writhed with exquisite pain. ---Anon the vivid flash of forked lightnings blazed along the horizon: loud and awful claps of deafening

thunder rolled tremendous over their heads;—the darkened skies seemed to ope in twain, to emit a sulphureous and loathsome stench!—but mark, ye sons of men, the division made between the innocent and the guilty; it was Cain alone that saw the dreadful face of the heavens, or heard the horrible crash!—to Mahala, Eliel, and Josiah (the wife and children of the despairing and forlorn fratricide), the moon seemed only under clouds, and no other interruption seemed to be given to their journeying onward.

Hail Innocence! thou spotless garment of celestial purity;—it is from thee alone we reap the fruits of solace in the approvings of a serene conscience;—for, of all the rufflings of a wearied spirit under the frowns of an evil world, none can disturb the peace and tranquil state of the interior, or spiritual part of man, unless guilt has occupied the seat of innocence.

To Cain, whose mind resembled Etna's encindred gulph, filled with dreadful furnaces of floating lava, every idea was of chaotic irregularity—frightful inundations and horrible cataracts poured in upon his imagination;—and in a hoarse lamentable voice he cried—"Whither am I straying?—Alas! to flee from the presence of a justly offended God—and from woe-ful and afflicted parents—is but a continuance of that deceit which implanted the odious passion of envy in my breast, and has wrought all this never-dying sorrow within my soul!—burst your horrible ethereal exhalations, ye rolling globes of fire, and let your instantaneous crush sink me into annihilation; for surely the Eternal has loaded me beyond the burden of a fallen creature! Am I the first who transgressed thy laws? Surely I am not. Yet behold those on whom thy sentence is passed—alive—calm, and under the influence of pleasure, until my cursed fall brought untasted bitterness into their cup!—Oh! can the rebel legions that have forfeited the joys of eternal bliss, share a

keener hell than that within my breast?—No—they cannot! I am accursed of God—abhorred by angels—and hated of men! my breast the seat of gnawing remorse and never-dying pangs of a miserably tormented conscience.—Fain would I flee, but what avails my flight? Can I flee from a wounded spirit?—I feel I cannot. Oh! wretched man that I am—who shall deliver me from this body of guilt?”

As he uttered these words, he threw himself into a close thicket of prickly brambles—the noise occasioned Mahala to turn her eyes around. Missing her husband, she screamed aloud—and laying down her infant care—ran back several paces beyond the tuft wherein the wretched son of misery was concealed. For some minutes the frantic wife of Cain sought her husband; and in a voice of lamentation exclaimed—“Alas. my beloved partner, whither art thou fled---I pray thee consider thy afflicted wife, who hath left a retreat of safety and certain refuge, to share thy hardships in exploring regions as yet unknown?”

Her wandering steps directed her to the spot where her mangled husband lay, whose sad sighs and groans of anguish, gave her notice of his excruciating pain of body as well as of mind. With eager steps and trembling hands she drew forth the wretched man of sorrows.---“Oh, my dearest spouse,” she cried, “how couldst thou thus torment thyself and me!--My love---my life---my distress is beyond all words! yet couldst thou love me---nay, if thou hatest me not, I am content.---O Cain! my beloved partner, why shouldst thou thus provoke the wrath of heaven to crush us beneath its lofty arch? thou art well versed in the science of wisdom, should thy inclinations bend to her direction.---Ah, my husband! haste from hence to yonder flowery turf, whereon I sat my two younger female infants---the elder objects of our care are gone, perhaps, beyond the limits of our search --Alas! my

dear, my heart doth shrink beyond its usual motions of terrific dread--methinks I hear the voice of my youngest infant's cries within my ear. Oh! my husband, how pallid are thy cheeks through the loss of blood!--thy footsteps seem filled with purple liquid: alas! I feel thy weight more ponderous than a lively pulsation requires--what means thy short sighs of catching the vital air? O just heavens!--my husband!--he dies!"

The wretched first-born of men now fell lifeless upon the earth, nor could all the strength of Mahala break his fall.

The wife of Cain, in sad dismay, now swooned away upon the body of her spouse:—nor did either awake until the messenger of the eternal Power touched them with his celestial wand:—"Arise," said he, "thou daughter of dust! I accost thee first; be it thy care to soothe the malign stubbornness of thy husband—be thou a guard to watch over his errors—be ready in reproof—but withal be temperate and mild—thy troubles are not a few—thy days will be many nevertheless—be satisfied—resignation to the will of heaven is of thee particularly required; strange will be the occurrences of thy time—but a period remote will give thee consolation, and an ample reward for all thy pains.

"To thee, O man of pollution, the dread Sovereign of the universe reserves a portion which I am not commissioned at this period to reveal—but so far will I direct thee, that from partner shalt thou receive instructions for thy government. Thy days will not be numerous—nor thy time in an earthly pilgrimage abounding with peace, joy, or happiness: thou art a murderer upon the face of the earth, and as such an one shalt thou be punished. Thy cares shall be many; thy expectations shall be frustrated; grief shall not depart from thy brow; in sorrow shalt thou

eat thy bread ; and the most acute bitterness shall be mingled with thy drink ;—guard off thine enemy ; the visions granted to thee during thy hours of sleep shall direct thee, by wise interpretation and careful application. Thou art chased out from the society of men, and from the presence of the Almighty—yet know, O thou son of dust and ashes ! that in the Omnipotent is thy strength, and in him alone thou livest, movest, and hast thy being. Be exact in the ways of justice, for from the omnipresence of God nothing can be hid ; nor can thy most secret thoughts be concealed from his omniscient view of thine heart. No more am I permitted to disclose, as to thy spiritual government ; and only add, that this thy course of direction takes thee to the barren wastes of Nod, on the east of Eden, the paradise from which thy disobedient parents fell. But to thee, O man, it is not permitted to repine for their transgression, for hadst thou been placed in their stead, thy breach of the divine ordinance would not have been less. Arise—pursue thy journey ; sorrows are upon thine eyelids ; the baleful exhalations of the atmosphere are no longer terrific—behold the day breaking forth from the eastern horizon—rise up and join thy wife—Mahala receives those consolations which the all-merciful Creator permits her to impart to thee, who to ages of unborn myriads shalt be a by-word of odium.”

So spake the angel of God—and ere he expanded his azure wings he gave Mahala a tender look, in which he announced peace, consolation, amity, and affection :—a serene smile sat on his lips and cheeks, and the sweetness of his eyes bespoke sympathizing complacency, as he disappeared under a cloud of celestial radiancy.

Cain was, by the messenger of heaven, melted into tears ; his heart received impressions he had not known before ; and amidst inarticulate sighs, embraced the

sorrowing partner of his woes. His unusual tenderness and melting softness charmed the susceptible soul of the gentle Mahala, so that in raptures of pleasure she received his kind embrace. Renewals of love's endearments were exchanged, and for a time they forgot their cares and numerous troubles.

Now the rosy tints of Aurora were just visible on the extensive lap of Nature, and the purple cloud-capt mountains appeared in gorgeous apparel, as heralds of the glorious ascending luminary of day, who was almost above the horizon, beyond the lofty towers of aspiring cedars which intersected the eastern view; but the bright solar rays had tinged with radiant spangles of illumination the higher pines, ere Mahala disengaged the encircling of her snowy arms around her husband's neck.

"My best beloved," exclaimed Mahala, "it is time we should succour our dear offspring, who *must* be impatient of our stay and long delay; for, ere I saw the celestial herald, mine eyes beheld our children on yon eastern mount, when, after some hour's reckoning, I heard the younger's voice in plaintive tones, which bring to my memory various suggestions of their safety.---Let us depart hence, my cheering conductor; thy footsteps shall be my guide to follow; and indeed my heart is under such a palpitation of disorder as to be ominous of ensuing grief: words are wanting to convey my ideas, for I feel more than I can express.

"Well, if it is the will of the Most High that our afflictions shall increase---let us not repine at his high command--for know, O Cain! that a sparrow of the cottage eave cannot fulfil her anxious cares in supplying her callow brood, without the permission of the great Creator of the world.

"This is a truth I firmly believe, for our dear lost brother, Abel, had the precept from a guardian angel of his soul's repose, who oft-times revealed unto him

the wonderful works and careful ways of the God of Providence; therefore the innocent are sure of protection from surrounding foes, unless the divine plan requires their dissolution."

Mahala ceased to speak, and on looking stedfast at her spouse, she saw his brow clouded with deadly sorrow, that strongly marked the inward workings of the mind---she therefore with anxious haste entwined her arms around his neck, and thus accosted him:---

"Alas! my husband, what means this lowering which thus heavily clouds thy aspect---say whence arises thy disorder---anguish is painted in thy looks---pray reveal the cause of this thy bitterness of soul?"---

The depressed man in sad discomfiture spurned away the tender partner of his bosom, and with frantic looks thus replied:---

"Knowest thou not that I slew this soft favourite of God and man, merely because he insulted my low estate, and claimed a prerogative to dictate precepts that were to form my manners into certain examples:---thou knowest, I say, that for this cause I acted the murderous deed!---alas! what do I say---the imp is gone---oh! what a wretch am I!---canst thou forgive my disordered sensation?---for he who formerly raised envy and rancorous spite within my breast, this instant whispered with a horrid grin, that thou wouldst upbraid me with our brother's death---he has just this moment left me---oh! I blush to name the horrid imaginations, with which the fiend that moment impregnated my unsettled brain---it was no less a crime than to add thy precious blood to the already blushing earth, as if thereby I should gain a serenity of mind;---O Mahala! pray to the great Supreme to heal my putrid wounds, the stench whereof will, I fear, embue my days with agonizing woes that will lead me down to the everlasting pains of the fallen enemies of the Most High, the Majesty of Heaven.---O my dearest!

what a deadly arrow assails my heart, the malignity whereof restrains my fluid liquids of circulation from their wonted course---assist my enfeebled strength---oh!---I sink into slumbering death?"

Mahala, almost frantic with surprise, and nearly bereft of sensation, now rushed forth to receive her fainting husband within her arms, and kissed the lips of her now apparent deceased partner of her love, whilst a torrent of the briny waters were sprinkled over his face; and in exertions of her whole strength endeavoured to raise his head that now had slipt from off her lap on the green mantle of the flowery herbage of the extensive copse---when, as he thus gained the repose of the earth, a hidden thorn of a new-dropt shoot of eltic wood entered the vein that surrounds the frontiers of the brow of human creatures, which caused a sudden flow of the precious liquid, and recalled sensation. Again the pulse beat their secondary motions of revolving time, and instantly he raised his head,--when thus, in awful plight, the affrighted wife of Cain in terror cried aloud, "O my husband!" and with efforts thrice, but all abortive, endeavoured to staunch the flowing gore; she then rent slips from off her garments to bandage round the wound, but ere she accomplished what she had so oft endeavoured to effect, her patient lost such a quantity of the animal system of life, the invigorating warmth of human beings, that he sensibly felt a weakening coolness in his frame, and with difficulty arose from the earth whereon he had lain; yet was he so far recovered from the acuteness of pain that assailed his heart and lungs, that the loss he had recently sustained he saw was salutary to restore the serenity of peaceful health.

"Ah! my beloved," said Mahala, "is the calmness of reason restored to thy soul? If so---then am I happy to congratulate thee from thy narrow escape of sin and death for upon thy fall to the earth, the

wicked spirit, which had assaulted thine ear, was in a whirlwind chased behind our backs, through the thickest part of the wood, by an angel in shining armour. O Cain, what a dreadful sight! I saw the fiend rush by in the mighty whirling of a disordered cloud of smoke; dread, horror, and agonizing pain were printed on his brow! whilst the celestial agent hastened in a radiant cloud, with a burnished sabre, to confine the hideous spirit with a mighty chain."

"O thou hallowed fair, thine eyes are open to the secrets of the great Creator of the world!—O my dearest!"—continued Cain—"pardon my afflicted state, and implore forgiveness of the Most High—as I dare not look up to the throne of his righteousness—for when I attempt to open my lips in pious ejaculations, I find them closed against a relaxation of the guilty paths I tread; and in no wise can I find an hour of solemn or determinate resolves, so numerous are the hovering spirits of Apollyon's train. Say, my gracious and affectionate spouse, art thou satisfied, that from my distempered brain arose those evil words that recently were uttered?"—

"My beloved husband," replied the affable spouse of the miserable fratricide. "let the memory, with the words, for ever be forgotten. Thou art well regarded, O my dearest spouse! but must for the present avoid longer conference on those points that are held out, for thou knowest that our dear children are to be sought after, and our journey pursued ere we can descant on topics of repose—yet be assured that in all my devotional invocations of the supreme Power, my prayer to him, who can only heal thy malady, shall be with humility of spirit earnestly addressed, that, in his own due season, thy wretched state may find another course, and peace be once more restored to thy anxious mind;—let us hence: our command from the Almighty's messenger forbids our sojourning more time

than now we have taken, ere we arrive on the eastern plains of Nod; that will only be some few days in sultry fatigue, before we can gain the resting arbour of those uncultivated groves."

'Thy words I duly shall regard," said Cain;—"I am ready to attend thy search—yet my prophetic soul—(if any such I do possess)—says our labour will be in vain."

"How so," exclaimed Mahala eagerly;—"explain thy words!"

"To search without finding our offspring," replied Cain.

Mahala, without inquiring further, followed her husband.

Soon they arrived on the summit of the hill—in vain they sought the objects of their tender care within the valley of the circumjacent mount.—Thus they spent the day in fruitless toils, and with redoubled anxiety saw the sable curtains of night drawn along the eastern skies ere they desisted; so great were their suffering feelings for their infant young—for now the dusky west put on the thick mantle of darkness, and shrowded all the hemisphere with a sable fleece. It was at this advanced hour, the wretched first-born of men and women, sat them down beneath the foliage of the overspreading palm.—Scarcely were they seated, when furious torrents of rain descended. Anon the horizon received a quick illumination from the vivid flash of ethereal fire.—The thick surrounding wood in awful silence received the liquid draughts, not even resounding the voice of thanks upon its leafy tongues.—Dismal howlings presently were heard—the wild inhabitants of the desert ranged unto their retired grassy bed, and in ravenous sort assailed the unguarded pair, who held no weapon of defence;—the lion foremost, with many voracious animals in the rear, thus they them attacked. Whilst the petrified

pair lay half dead with fear, a sudden flash of a dreadful sulphureous cloud of combustible fire struck the beasts of prey with such extraordinary fear, that, with surprising speed, they hastened from their sight, and vanished into the woods.

The rising day gave direction to the sojourners to pursue their route; and so in continuation spent seven more before they encountered the confines of Nod.

At length, wearied with fatigue, and worn out with grief, the unhappy pair arrived on the plains of the eastern land, when they sat them down, and at a few paces distant descried the mark given of the promised land by the archangel Uriel.—Spent with heavy toils, their wretched limbs in pain, they, for a few short hours, forgot their sorrows in the arms of gentle sleep.

BOOK II

AGONY OF CONSCIENCE DESCRIBED.—THE DREAM OF CAIN.—THE PRAYER OF MAHALA.—THE PRAYER OF CAIN.—MAHALA RELATES THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.—INFLUENCE OF FEMALE CHARACTER.—INFLUENCE OF MAHALA ON CAIN.—THEY REACH THE LAND OF NOD.

ALAS! what avails a foreign clime to the gnawings of a self-condemned wretch, whose conscience bears the sting of the never-dying worm?

In vain doth the polluted wretch, whose hands have been embrued in innocent blood, endeavour to flee from the bickerings of guilt, remorse, and inward horror! the murderer's sleep is fickle over with frightful spectres of dreadful aspects that prey upon his senses

making even his wakeful postures subject to startings of fear and pusillanimity ! hence the wildness of chimerical illusions drawn from sources of atrocity.

“ Fade, ye evergreens—ye towering cedars—ye blushing blossoms of scaly palm—be dry, ye winding rills, that sung the ditty of the dying sacrifice to sin—O ye birds and beasts who saw the sight, be for ever mute—thou earth, that openedst thy mouth to receive a brother’s blood, be thou for ever barren—Ha ! who comes here ? ”—

Thus spoke the awakened fugitive from his terrific dream—while the fair partner of his woes in pleasing slumbers was traversing imaginary regions of unparalleled bliss—her sportive fancy, in pleasurable sort, held the illusive dream as exquisite delight, and in transports of joy she opened her eyes ; but to paint the contrast between ideal and real scenes, requires the most attentive skill. For as the wanton fawn, that sports in the adjacent thicket to her painful dam, meets with fearful surprise in a sudden skip within the wolf’s retreat, so were Mahala’s visionary joys instantly changed into embittered pangs of acute distress, and agonizing doubts ; with fond eagerness she raised her head, and on inquiring, her spouse gave a detail of his visionary disquietude of mind, in the following words :—

“ Be not distempered, my dearest, best beloved, and much esteemed wife,—my dreams were beyond the extremes in nature, and presented scenes of the horrid kingdom of the infernal chief ;—methought I was freed from the gross and cumbrous body of clay which now clothes my spirit—and for my horrid and detested crimes of murder and malignity of heart in my mpenitent course of life, delivered over to the torments of the enemies of God, in which I was to partake a large portion ; for such was the eternal doom

pronounced by the angel of death, when he delivered me to the implacable tormentors !

“ O my dearest, how I rejoice to find it was but a dream !—to paint but a faint idea of the remembrance, that still remains upon the foliage of my imagination, would affright thy virtuous and unpolluted soul :—In fine, I saw the regions of eternal night without any intermission, to consist of blackness, of burning and consuming clouds, that were closely enfolded in pitchy mazes of living fire, yet so strange in its nature, as to emit no luminous spark ; but in extreme heat surpassed the power of yon fiery globe, which warms this earth from an immeasurable distance—yes, my beloved ! the fire was of such penetrating keenness, from a liquid lava that flows along those dreadful confines, that every pore of my spiritual form received exquisite torments, which was attended by the insults, scoffs, mocks, and torturing cruelties of infernal spirits. Amongst the crowd there was none more active than Anamalech, that vile fiend who raised within my breast a desire of revenge against my dear and much-lamented brother. This demon exulted in his conquest over the life of man.—When the mighty host of deformed spirits of this place of misery and black despair, shouted with dreadful yellings their approvings of his deed—then I perceived by the deadly blue flames which emitted from their mouths, that the surface of this extensive domain of Satan, had various caverns of liquid fire, which served as springs to supply the lake of sulphureous fire, whose stench was intolerable, and painful in the extreme to my senses—when also I beheld the wretched sons of iniquity, shackled with ponderous chains of living fire in various forms of loathsome animals—**nor** were any without the insignia of a monstrous serpent of poisonous breathings, as emblematical of Satan’s artifice to

deceive the first created of human species—Anon the whole assembly, in agonizing remembrance of their celestial joys, cursed each other—and then their own existence, and fearfully tore from off their hideous heads the bristly hair of living snakes, in frantic despair, and acknowledged the Supreme Power to be only just and great in thus punishing their guilt, and continuing their eternal deaths!—then again they severally relapsed into their rebellious apostacy; nor were any of them able to find a moment to repent, for the time of it was wrested for ever from them. In hideous forms, and in wild disorder, they attacked each other in furious fight with infernal weapons of frightful shapes;—again, when torn and mangled by each other, they wept in strains of unutterable woe—the terror, grief, shame, torment, and conscious reflection of the inhabitants of those regions of eternal death, fail all description:—Nor is there a minute to alleviate their woes—for a routine of evils continually succeed each other; and to make their misery complete, the Paradise of God is clear to view, wherein eternal joys are dealt out in abundance to the blessed inhabitants of that abode!

“O Mahala! from the place of torment, even the gulph of eternal misery, the abyss of the damned, I beheld my angelic brother Abel; I saw him on the verge of a coral rock, that jutted out from between the confines of celestial reservoirs of pure water, and ambrosial walks of shaded sweets, which emitted fragrant odours, as the beautiful and godlike inhabitants, in words of musical accents chanted forth in the praise of him, who by his word created the numerous worlds.—My feelings were then without bounds in excessive motion—I felt, I saw, I heard, and in my wild transports of sorrow, sunk beneath my burden of eternal wrath, when I was roused into sensible feelings of pain, to add to my torments of mind; so that my misery

wanted nothing in the measure of its completion: But mark my converse with that ever blessed spirit, my dearest and once affectionate brother, as he sat on the confines of Paradise: ‘Be wise unto salvation, and make proper use of this vision.’ Thus saying, he waved his hand, in which I could perceive he held a sceptre entwined with myrtle and olive sprigs; and then with a sweetness of countenance peculiar to the celestial spirits, he bowed in graceful attitude, as though he still would render me reverence and love. On losing sight of this beautiful scene of heavenly joys, I suddenly awoke in the utmost degree of fear and terrific hauntings, and now have made known to you the sum of my visionary travail, wherein I have suffered so much in spirit, that my strength is almost gone, and I seem to bear in mind as though I actually underwent the singular occurrences of this awful visitation of spirit.”

Here Cain ceased to speak; and Mahala, with a benignity of aspect that resembled the purity of celestial adoration, with a collected state of spirits, thus replied:

“Thy name, O great Creator of all things, be for ever blessed!—to thee alone, O wise and gracious God of mercy! are our thanks to be rendered—to thee are our praises and oblations to be offered, for thy grace and mercy in sparing us, thy sinful creatures. O thou just and perfect Being, of infinite goodness! be pleased to accept of our unfeigned and humble thanks for all the favours thou in thy bounteous care art pleased to render unto such undeserving creatures.—May thy mysteries be rightly understood, and faithfully interpreted by us in the sight of supernatural worlds, wherein we have beheld wonderful appearances.—It is our duty to offer thee the tribute of thanks and praise for our preservation from so many recent dangers, and crowding evils—

“ Yes, O mighty Mover of the heavens ! It is thine to accept, and thou hast promised to our parents to receive, the humble addresses of their offspring ; which name we in reverential awe beg leave to adopt ; nor cast us off, O our Maker ! in this desolated and uncultivated land—but grant unto us a remission of our sins, and by thy providence protect us from future causes of baleful guilt, so that at the hour of dissolution the angel of our ministry may present us spotless before the footsteps of thy throne.

“ Merciful Father of all, we repose our cares within thy ordering decrees of human affairs, and only hope, by humble resignation to thy will, to find the solacing rest that peace in faith can fully supply. Be gracious and merciful, O God, to this sinful mortal who has fallen within thy just displeasure—even my husband, who received me at thy command. Grant, O righteous Father of beneficence ! that by a perpetual sense of his crime, and a sincerity of heart to bewail his deeds, which are clouded with the transgression of thy high commandment, he may be enabled to wash away the stains of guilt which pollute his soul,—that we may in thy kingdom join our dear and much beloved brother Abel, there to rest the unlimited ages of eternity’s boundless expanse ! If thy creatures have found favour in thy sight, by our visions of sleep, fulfil, O Almighty ! a further assurance by future revelations—this mayest thou grant, O Lord God ! if it be thy divine pleasure, and in thy own name, and for thy sake alone, we humbly request it—for which, and all mercies vouchsafed unto us, may our hearts for ever continue to be humbly thankful for thy name’s sake, to whom be thanks, praise, and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.”

Mahala here closed her invocation of the Deity, and arose from her knees.

Cain, in a transport of delight with which his

gloomy aspect was illumined (for the first time in his life) with a sincerity of heart, fell prostrate on the earth, and in a loud voice spoke as follows:—

“O thou! who rulest the unlimited expanse, and givest life and being to the unnumbered creatures of thy hand, and in thy view canst behold the span of time and the infinitude of eternity, be merciful to thy fallen creature—and compassionate his deep distress. O Almighty power! I am now convinced that, while under thy displeasure, none of thy immortal creatures (for such may I esteem the human race) can enjoy a state of happiness; as after this mortal tabernacle is put off, we shall live for ever in a state proportioned to the holiness and purity of our characters while on earth. To thee, O Father of our souls, shall we only cry, for it is thine to save and help—it is thou alone caust pardon and deliver—and of thee, O gracious God, I crave pardon and forgiveness—nor let me in the multitude of works ask amiss—but mercifully incline thine ears to the supplication of my soul, refresh it with thy grace, and give it rest in a surety of hope, that my sins are pardoned, and my peace with thee is fully established. Further vouchsafe to replenish my soul with thy holy counsel, that I may not depart from thy statutes, nor inculcate vice through the crafts or deceits of evil that reigns in my flesh, or which may be suggested by the malignant spirits those minions of the grand enemy of our nature, who so craftily deceived our parents in the transcendent garden of delightful Paradise—but grant these my petitions, O righteous God, for thy name’s sake. Amen.”

Cain having closed his prayer to God, Mahala tenderly embraced him, and said, “Now of a truth I know that the divine influence hath been shed on thee, for in my visions of sleep, the bright agent of the Most High revealed the secret of thy returning strength—

nevertheless, be humble,—be patient,—be fully resigned, under all the dispensations of thy Maker,—for from those must the experience of thy faith under trial result, and by which shalt thou secure unto thyself that celestial joy which the presence of the dread Sovereign of the universe can only give, when thou shalt, with myriads of holy angels, adore in ecstatic transport, and with astonished fervour, in the realms of eternal light, where joys can have no end ; even the city of the great and eternal Author of all that lives, moves, or has a being !—

“ For thou knowest it is from his word alone this great world and all the surrounding orbs had their source ; at his command chaotic matter divided itself into light and darkness !—cold and heat yet wanted a farther command to divide those parts again, wherefore those subdivisions were at his command thus ordered, which they respectively obeyed—for, as yet, was nothing on the first day of creation, but light and heat above, and cold and darkness below.

“ The second day, or measure of God’s commandments, commenced with the form of the firmament, and the reservoirs for the waters.

“ The third day, or measure of God’s work, was the formation of earth and seas, as also of the rivers and lakes, and likewise the herbs and fruits of the earth.

“ On the fourth day, or space of God’s work, were the sun and moon created, and not before ; for the three preceding measures, which are accounted as days, were but periods for the measuring of time by God’s commandment, for as yet were not the luminaries created ; on the fourth day was the matter collected for their creation, when they were severally commanded to revolve in their orbits, and to render service unto man.

“ The fifth day was employed by our God in supplying the sea with fishes, and the air with fowls.”

“ The sixth day were all other creatures that have life, at God’s word created, in the early part of the morning.

“ But at noon, as the glorious luminary, the lamp of heaven, had ascended his highest point of the arch of his diurnal motion through the heavens, just at his greatest altitude, he was commanded to rest there until the Lord God of heaven had formed man from the dust of the earth, and in his nostrils breathed the breath of life. Thus was our sire created, and next formed our common mother Eve.

“ What need we any further instruction than to search into the treasures of our God ? for unto them that seek, shall wisdom be given ; and by them that search, shall understanding be found.

“ The creatures of the earth, like unto us, possess the five senses of God’s mighty power, inasmuch as they can taste, smell, hear, see, and are capable of the sensation of touching ;—therefore those were not our greatest perfections in this organized body of flesh, for as the angel in the vision of my dream, with empyreal ecstasy, gave the glory to the Most High, that we were created with two other senses as superior to all the rest, namely, understanding and speech ; the first to direct our faculties and passions in the perception of ideas, or actively by judging of the propriety which we denominate by the powers of willing or abstaining, to be reason, for herein do we surpass the brutal creation, who have no guide but nature, or animal propensities.

“ Again, the other sense of conveying our ideas by words, which our Maker has defined speech, is, in itself, a blessing of communication, of which the inferior world can in no wise partake, and is, of all others, the greatest surety of the immortality of that spirit which the Lord breathed into us at our first formation and is to follow in all our posterity ;—But,

my beloved, to close the particulars of this relation, which was revealed to me in last night's sleep, the angel hath assured me that this is the seventh day, wherein the Lord rested from his work of creation, and will reveal his dread commands in ages yet to come, that it is to be kept holy during all the then succeeding ages until the end of time, when we shall put on the eternal rest and peace of our God in the beatific visions, where unmeasured ages shall pass away unnumbered in sabbaths of praise, thanks, and worship of him who is the only source of glory, power, dominion, love, joy, and happiness."

Here Mahala, with a pious ejaculation, ended her discourse; when the penitent son of sin and sorrow thus exclaimed :

"O thou blessed of God, be ever happy, be ever wise—for thine it is the revelations of the Highest to know; let us, therefore, according to thy word, make the sabbath to commence;—yes—let us set this day apart for ever—let us teach our future progeny its sanctification:—but, as the shower is now beginning to fall, this open spot affords not shelter; I can perceive yonder spreading palm to be a place of refuge from the storm's rage."

Cain and Mahala having retired to the shelter of the palm-tree, there communed with each other on spiritual matters, and spent the day in prayers to Almighty God; so far was compunction seated in the breast of the mourning fratricide; to effect which, the affability and persuasive doctrine of truth, and pure maxims of sincerity of heart of Mahala, the wife of his bosom, did not a little contribute.

So far as it is plain that any person endowed with purity of understanding in the knowledge of celestial things, may, with certainty, convert an erring partner, whether husband or wife. For, as the hard and impenetrable marble is worn by the gentle dropping of ■

soft liquid, so is the ferocity of human creatures tamed by gentle advice and soothing admonition ; or, as the mighty monarch of the forest, that with resistless fury can force down the lofty pine, and take his prey within the sight of an associated army of enemies without fear, and regardless of all obstructions, yet, by the subtlety of the herdsman's net, is conquered by weak cords that have nought to recommend their suretyship but a variety of knotting ; for the number, when altogether exerting their strength, do with ease secure the noble animal, and subject him to fear and death ; so that the shepherd is with ease master of the forest king : and he that lately made the numerous wild inhabitants quake at his roar, is now no more a terror, but dies ignominiously, without attacking even the simple sheep-dog who attends his master to worry the fatigued and panting animal. Just so was the hard and rugged brow of Cain subdued by the soft and gentle rebukes, admonitions, councils, and tenderness of his wife—for indeed his fierceness was overpowered by the sacred tenets infused into his troubled conceptive faculties by his innocent partner ; who, notwithstanding her little knowledge of the pangs of guilt, yet had words of spiritual truths so as to entangle him in a net of knowledge of that which was certain death to his carnal inclinations.

Cain was in many instances convinced, and gave eager hearing to Mahala ; but yet he could in no wise efface the terrific mark of God imprinted on his forehead—in vain he endeavoured to wash away the frightfulness of his physiognomy, but as often found it was impracticable—for never can the stains of heinous crimes be made clean, unless purged by long and continued habits of repenting sorrow and contrition of heart ; therefore the casual repentant cannot remove so easily, as he would fondly indulge, his imaginations, until the Deity views the heart as

cleansed from pollution ; for a man's pretensions to be virtuous, good, or penitent, have no efficacy to importune his conscience to be silent in her severe lectures of reprehension. So it was yet with Cain ; he knew not the proof of his stability, for light and darkness alternately had guidance of his paths : nor could he ascertain his resolves for a single day, so new was the profession he had learned, and so precarious are the various paths that lead out of the road of spiritual life, to that of endless destruction ; for the enemy of our nature is more assiduous to gain over the reclaimed sinner, than he is to seduce innocence ; so great is his desire to plunge human beings into the curse of his everlasting doom of terror, horror, and torment, beside the unrepentant state of being an enemy to God !—How fearful is such a case, and how much to be dreaded is such a situation !

The land unto which Cain had arrived was pleasing to the sight, and had plenty of fruits and streams to water it ; materials too were at hand, with which to build a hut ; nor did the lonely pair decline industry.

A few days after their arrival, they fixed upon a gentle rising plain which lay between two lofty mountains on the north and south, and a meandering brook of crystal waters that enclosed the eastern borders, and then, with a solemn voice of echoing murmurs, ran down precipitately several steep and craggy rocks : thence the flooded pearls of dashing waves threw out, with impetuous force, their copious stores ; which mixing with the tumbling sheets, made the cascade shower of pearly dews, adding beauty and grandeur to the works of nature, and, of course, sublimely great. The other point towards the west, had woods of awful and stupendous height, whose copse and spruce were impenetrable ; for unto Pison, the great river of Eden, was this mighty forest planted by the hand of God.

Here Cain, and his helpmate, raised their hut, they first laid open the soil to receive the seeds of the earth; and in less than a year saw themselves possessed of another son, to whom Cain gave the name of Enoch, and in his name he called the new residence he had now possessed; and without further occurrence saw a second year completed.

BOOK III

HAPPINESS OF THE PIOUS.—EXCLAMATION OF CAIN.—REPLY OF MAHALA.—REFLECTIONS ON LIFE.—CONTEST BETWEEN A LION AND TIGRESS.—DANGER OF CAIN.—HIS SOLILOQUY.—SITUATION OF ADAM AND EVE.—THEIR FAMILY.—THEY SOOTH THE SORROWS OF THIRZA.—THEY GO IN QUEST OF CAIN.—BIRTH OF SETH.—INCREASE OF THE FAMILY OF CAIN.—HIS CONTRITION.

HAPPY are those who early seek the altar of devotion, whereby they ensure unto themselves the favour and guidance of the Most High; for unto those that are thus endowed with true wisdom, will the great and glorious works of the Omnipotent be revealed; and he shall thereby flourish in the land as a willow-tree adjacent to the stream; his words shall clothe him with true regard from angels and men, and in the end of his days shall he rejoice in the arm of the Almighty, for in him is his strength and his refuge. Nor shall he be forsaken in the hour of dissolution, for his hope is on high, and lives beyond the dark mansions of the grave; and in faith of such assurance and true belief, he lays him down in peace, and smiles at the slumber of death; for he hath lived in charity, and dies in such love, so that he cannot feel the sting of death; nor is the grave a victor over him, for he soweth in corruption, with a certainty to reap incorruptible fruit

in that day when the world shall be judged in righteousness.

As the hart is refreshed by the cooling reservoir in the shaded banks of the slow-moving level of a deep cut rill, whose source is little more than continued drops, yet by a passage through the plain, fills the hollow up to its level; when she retires from the sun-burnt cliff to evade the darting rays of mid-day sun, or the hard breathing toil of fleeing from the relentless hunter's eager chase, when the flood alone can save her from instantaneous death, and gives the wearied animal new vigour to elude the dangers that portend; so were the joys of Cain and his spouse, when from the hand of Heaven a female was added to their family. Herein, said Cain, shall my name be perpetuated; for, until this time did I doubt the goodness of Heaven, and held suspicions that my name would be blotted out from amongst those who should replenish and multiply the sons of men.

Mahala far exceeded her husband in devout praises unto the Lord, and in her enraptured ecstasy fainted away.

The unexpected sight allayed the exulting joys of Cain, and instantly he sunk into extreme sadness:—"Alas!" he cried, "am I such an unfortunate wretch as to be the sport of time, and the partaker of the bitterness of many deaths!—Oh, whence had I this torment! I have been from my early days, until now, a mourner and a man of sorrows. In vain do I seek repose, for sin and death are constantly at my door; my deserts are such, I shall not be freed from continual tribulations, for in error is my understanding bewildered, and from evil I cannot separate the imaginations of my heart. O wretched man, thy blessing seems to forerun thy curse!—Ha! is she still alive—my dear Mahala!"

He then embraced her in his arms, and administered

a spicy fruit, whose aromatic odour soon restored the signs of animated strength, and gave to Cain a second joy.

“ Ah ! my dear,” said Mahala, “ wherefore dost thou repine ?—Although deprived of strength in offices of external sensation, yet I distinctly heard your words, which were not befitting thy situation, nor as a finite being of transitory existence in this life ; for thou knowest full well that the decrees of heaven are just and faithful, and therefore, upon what pretext are thy complaints ?

“ Thy sorrows for my seeming dissolution were unbecoming, for thou didst not seek a remedy, or try an experiment to save a fleeting breath, but utteredst thy dislike to the will of the Most High.”

Cain, unable to answer to her charge, in sad silence groaned without reply. Again she resumed her admonition ; when he in sullen silence withdrew, leaving his son and new-born daughter to Mahala’s feeble care.

No sooner was Cain from the presence of his wife, whom he conceived to be in error, than he strayed into the unknown paths of the extensive forest, which bounded his meadowed plain, and in a deep vaulted furrow took his way onward, not knowing whither, nor considering to what end, or upon what pretence, he strayed through the dismal haunt.

Life, in the highest arch-angel and in the lowest reptile, is one and the same in its original essence and source, which is God ; and it is the difference in the subject, or recipient, that alone varies the form of it. Man has a threefold capacity, each one above another, which no other creature has, and therefore is receptive of the spiritual and rational, as well as of the animal life. The exercise and improvement of the faculties open the two former ; but where they continue shut, he is no better than a sensual animal (as is

to be seen in too many among those who bear the Christian name); though, the root of his nature being in the eternal world, thence he must be of immortal continuance in existence, whether of good or evil society.

They who attain no higher than the rational life in this world, may be great scholars, and able to speculate highly, to reason deeply, and talk profoundly on dark or abstruse subjects; but if they advance not to some sense of spiritual things, or to a conscientious discharge of religious duties, according to the light they receive from above, they cannot reach to the spiritual life here, and it is to be feared will remain so through the unmeasurable space of all eternity; for no new principle remains to be opened to the soul in the other life; for, according to the word of truth, as man falls (*i. e.* as he dies), so is he to remain during the boundless existence of eternal life—here, therefore, only is that great work to be performed; for according to our actions does it appear to our own view (our consciences), whether we are in the direct road to heaven or hell.

Oft may the observant eye behold a man in a state of intoxication, who, during his ebriety, considers not whither he is bound, nor fears the gulph or cataract to which he is unwarily advancing, until some considerable slip, or accidental fall, restores to him his absorbed senses; he rouses from his lethargic state of sensation, and, looking around with surprise, beholds his danger. So were the faculties of Cain benumbed with gross ideas of supposed wrongs proceeding from his loving spouse, who loved him as her better half; yet he, by erroneous measure, saw her in another light, therefore judged her severe and harsh. Anon the rising boughs of tufted bay trees, with a loud rustling of the leaves, disclosed to view a terrific combat. A tigress, robbed of her young by the lion's

voracious appetite, had, in the fact, convinced herself the potent chief of the quadruped race was guilty of the murderous deed, and in a furious rage of wrath and unrelenting flexibility, attacked the barbarous despoiler of her tender care.

The lion thus assailed, and unprepared for a contending match of powerful exertion in brutal strength, was, by the vigour of the tigress, sadly hurt, ere he was in a condition of preparation ready to return the salute.—Added to this misfortune of being surprised by the furious dam of the wild brood of cubs, the mate of the sorrowful female came to her assistance, and instinctively assisted his mate, and, both together, plied the royal brute with a sufficient match to his great skill in fight and mighty strength.

It was here Cain was convinced he was in the mouth of danger—he fled aside, but scarce knew which way to run, for the forest echoed with the mighty roar—the fight was desperate as doubtful; but at length the straying mortal saw the lion victorious, at the same time saw the poor animals expiring in defending their lawful right.—“Is this justice!” exclaimed the son of Adam:—“if it is, then what are wrongs!”—But scarcely had he spoken these words, when the lion, through loss of blood and dreadful rents and wounded flesh, fell lifeless near the spot.

“Ah!” said Cain, “I see my error—I draw conclusions precipitately—my temper is hasty—I must curb that dangerous fire that too oft has kindled my soul into a flame—I see a lesson in the dark recesses of the crowded forest—this brute who was the conqueror and the aggressor, was not long triumphant; he perished in his guilt.

“My parents were kind and good to me when I had robbed them of a goodly son; yet I felt no inclination to confess my guilt, otherwise than by aggravating vaunts of wickedness in the hour of my frantic sad-

ness:—No; I did not lessen the horror of the deed by applying balsam to the wound I gave their hearts, but relentlessly quitted the plains of Salem, wherein they now inhabit, and fled thither from God's presence and their rebuke.—Alas! how vain are my attempts; for as the lion, who with superior force overcame the injured animals in the forest, and then fell a victim to his untimely passion of preying on the innocent young so shall my guilt be pursued by punishments that shall fall heavy on my head at an unexpected and unguarded hour.

“I am now convinced that my hasty resolves are erroneous and partial; I shall return and ask forgiveness of my excellent wife, who only is kind to me in admonishing me to flee from sin; therefore I shall henceforward endeavour to deserve her kindness.”

Cain sought the path under the vaulted shrubs and contracting brambles, without effect, and with laboured difficulty got to the verge of the forest ere it was dark, and at length arrived at his dwelling, quite wearied and spent with fatigue.

Mahala, on account of her recent travail, was very weak; and agitated by the abrupt manner of her husband's departure, was very much indisposed; feverish symptoms were evident in the glowing blush of heat in either cheek; the swelling eye-lids and dimness of sight, heated fluids, quick pulsation, and a difficulty in respiration, were omens too obvious to be overlooked.

Cain saw his affectionate companion in this state but through his indiscreet route, was so fatigued that he was incapable to give her any assistance.

Here let us leave the strangers in Nod, and look towards Salem, to behold the condition of our first parents, and their offspring there.

ADAM and EVE no sooner lost their son and daugh-

ter, than they sought around in the adjacent woods, whither they supposed most probably would be the retreat of their sorrowing son, who so wickedly had slain their beloved Abel.

Thirza, the disconsolate widow of the first of men over whom death assumed dominion, was restless the whole night ; and hearing the sighs and lamentations of her sister Mahala, her curiosity had such influence over her watch, that she was guided solely to know the issue of the lonesome haunt, she saw her kindred hastening to, as the thickest part of the dismal shade was their direction.

By Cain's voice and gloomy observation, she heard and distinctly understood that towards the east of the flowery plain was the route destined to the unhappy family.

Further, the radiant oriental star of night was the guidance of Mahala and her spouse, as onward they hastily directed their footsteps over the eastern lawn which led into the russet covering of the forest wilds.

This intelligence gained, she quickly returned unto the cottage of Adam and Eve, whom she found in postures of devotion ; and with fervent zeal imploring the mercy of the Divine Being to spare, pardon, regenerate, and make unto them and himself a happy man, their unfortunate and first-born wicked son, even Cain, the murderer of his brother.

Many were the pious entreaties of Adam unto the Most High, to look with compassion on him, the work of his hands ; therefore, not to cast off for ever the erring of a weak unguided mortal, whose certainty in this world was only death ; that the concomitants of man's life were, by his transgression, a body of evils, whose only productions were various sins—therefore, as mercy was given unto him, to let the same grace shine upon his fallen son ; to whom, under a convic-

tion of his guilt, a humble and contrite heart might be restored by mercy, unto the practice of purer and holy living, under a convinced state of his malediction and unheard-of malefaction.

Eve, with uplifted hands and streaming eyes, invoked the awful Majesty of Heaven to look unto her, the miraculous work of the Great Supreme; that as she had fallen into sin by the subtlety of Satan, under his artful disguise, whereby evil became hereditary, and her offspring were thereby constantly under its influence, she besought the dread Sovereign of the Universe to grant that mercy unto her first-born son, which he was in his almighty goodness pleased, and did vouchsafe to grant unto her when she had so wickedly broken the commandment which she received at the mouth of the most High and Omnipotent God, —that the sin and folly of her rash and unthinking son was but an offence against their precepts only, for from the high arch of Heaven the murderer had received no command; she, therefore, humbly intreated the Almighty to pardon that sin which the enemy to his nature, and the corrupt state of his flesh, had seduced him to commit.

Eve now was silent; and Thirza advanced with fresh excitements to grief and sadness painted on her countenance, when Adam and Eve with soothing tenderness endeavoured to add comfort with their words unto the mourning widow of the fallen saint.

Tears relieved the sorrows of her anxious breast: and as soon as she had recovered the use of the organs of speech, the innocent fair gave a relation of all she knew, and what were her conjectures relative to the flight of Cain.

Meanwhile, it was deliberated upon by Adam, Eve and Thirza, whether he should not follow their track, lest they should fall into some unforeseen danger in

the unfrequented wood, and there be lost through want of means of food, or assistance to guide them out again.

The council closed.—Eve and Thirza were to await the return of Adam, to be acquainted with the particulars he should of consequence be acquainted with, if he was so fortunate as to overtake them, his children who were hurrying from his rebuke, and also from the presence of the Almighty.

Adam with hasty steps forsook the plain ; and on the entrance of the wood was directed by the nocturnal star, which was partly towards the east, and with eagerness of foot soon travelled many miles.

About the morning watch Adam reached the flowery banks whereon the children of Cain were seated, and directed his speech unto Josiah, who with Eliel were impatient of delay, enquired where their parents were. When, ere Eliel or his brother could reply, an angel in azure robes, tinged with celestial purple, announced unto Adam, that he (Adam) should conduct the children safely unto Salem, and no more inquire concerning Cain or Mahala ; for, at a time remote from that, he should see the state of his children, who were then directing their course towards the land allotted them by the Most High.

Presently after the angel disappeared in a refulgent cloud of radiance.

Adam, without more words, or any further expostulations, left the lonely spot, and with a young infant on either arm, and one on either side, returned to the beautiful plains of Salem, where he was received by Eve and Thirza with impatient joy for their safe return : and on his recital of the vision of the sacred spirit, they all, with humility of heart and sincere tongues, praised the Lord.

No sooner were the children returned safe than

Thirza claimed the protection of the infant charge of Cain and Mahala, which her parents readily granted her.

Shortly after was born unto Adam another son, whose birth was given instead of Abel. His name was, by Adam's vision, to be called Seth, or a renewal: importing that he was given instead of the deceased.

This was a child of promise; for from his lineage sprung the lion of the tribe of Juda, in the fulness of time, as was appointed by the Most High; nor was there a greater type to show the redemption of fallen man, than God's goodness in raising up the seed of Adam to produce that race of whom Shiloh was to proceed; for in Abel was the blessing; and in Cain the curse; yet unto Abel was the curse here, by sin, but a blessing early through righteousness in the world of spirits, made perfect through mercy and grace—and unto Cain the blessing here and the curse hereafter revoked; inasmuch as by grace he found a day of acceptance to atone for his sins, and an assurance of salvation through faith, whereby he received a lively hope to inherit the promises.

With attentive care Thirza brought up the children of her sister; nor were Eve and her tender husband wanting in their parental kindness to provide for the rising family.

Return we now to Nod, or the land of disguise, wherein we left the wife of Cain in her weak and helpless state of illness; but through the blessing of that night's repose, and refreshing draughts of cooling liquor, which was the produce of some fruits brought home by Cain from the forest wherein he had been Mahala instantly recovered, and next day was freed from the sorrowing of a sickly bed.

In days and weeks of care, and months and years of trouble, Cain and Mahala saw their progeny increase to seven daughters, for from this time had Mahala twins. Yet unto Cain was born no other son than Enoch ; for from him was to spring a multitude which should replenish the world exceedingly : yet, in the fulness of time, their evil caused an inundation of the deep, and the reservoirs of Heaven to give the whole of their collected waters at once, by their iniquity in doing that which pleased their sight, and restraining themselves from nothing that was sensual or unclean.

They became as mighty giants in the earth, and in process of time drew down the vengeance of the Most High to destroy the world for their sakes ; inasmuch as they had, by their crying sins, tainted the whole race of mankind, and none was found faithful but one man, even Noah, and through his righteousness was his family saved to perpetuate the world.

Cain having, with daily expiation for his sins, offered with a contrite heart a continual prayer, and at length attempted to offer unto God a sin-offering and an offering of peace, in which Mahala assisted with a purity of heart and a peculiar joy, for the grace of the Most High to bring to a sense of his guilt her once suffering and accursed partner, was now, through mercy, accepted of God, for his altars shone with brightness, and his offerings were consumed in a pillar of a towering cloud, emblematical of God's gracious favour, so that Cain, with his heart and voice raised in melody to God, gave thanks unto him whose it is to give life and health, and plenitude of grace to preserve man from the errings and strayings of his warfare in this state of probation.

Be thine the task, O man of guilt, who hast received from the hand of the Almighty a commission of peace, to rest in comfort through the assurance of the seal

a pardon granted at the Christian sacrifice for sin, in the commemorating the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has, by his precious blood, washed us from our pollutions, and will, if we seek his spiritual kingdom, present us before his Father spotless and without a blemish, to be numbered with his saints and angels; to be his children and not his slaves; to be of his household and not his servants; to be his brethren and not his removed relatives!

O Christian people, who are under the easy yoke and light burthen of redemption, be wise unto salvation; for unto every one is given the means, by which to obtain life and immortality, and to avoid sin and everlasting death.

BOOK IV.

THE MISERY OF THE WICKED.—MEDITATION OF CAIN.—CONVERSATION OF CAIN AND MAHALA.—MARRIAGE OF ENOCH.—HIS POSTERITY.—CAIN ERECTS THE CITY OF ENOCH.—REFRACTORY CONDUCT OF HIS CHILDREN.—HIS ADDRESS TO THEM.—HIS INEFFECTUAL EFFORTS TO RECLAIM THEM.—THEIR CHARACTER—DEPARTURE OF CAIN AND MAHALA.

IN sorrow let the perpetrators of wickedness mourn the foulness of their crimes; for from a compunction of soul is the penitent known: of this a tender and wounded conscience bears perpetual record; otherwise the convert, under his disguise of sanctity, is at best but the wretched impostor of hypocrisy, the constant agent of sin, and the forerunner of death; unto whom is reserved blackness and darkness, during the innumerable ages of eternity.

Let the secure take heed that he stands fast, and

let the beguiling son of fraud know, that the mockery of his cunning is to none more dangerous and destructive than to his own wretched soul ; which must for ever mourn the folly of a wicked and unthinking mouldering tabernacle, that is composed of dust and ashes, made up of such perishable materials as to be only the tenement of a day—a mere vapour—a shadow—a span of no continuance, but to fall into corruption, from whence it had its original ; for man is produced from dust, therefore to dust shall he return.

Wherefore all the railing for worldly grandeur and ostentatious pomp ? Ah ! what avails the rank of title the empty vaunts of simple mortals, which at the best are childish toys that secure no lasting peace, no profitable hold whereto we can resort in the hour of trouble, the trying time of danger—when the pale and grim-visaged king of terrors slides back the curtain, and presents the hour-glass already run down.

'Tis now the condemned mortal, whose doom is announced, will frankly own, that, in the crowd of flatterers who were wont to feign and raise monuments of immortal infallibility in their adulatory encomiums, there were none honest nor sincere who possessed unadorned truth : for all their mock respect is now upon the eve of dark oblivion, never to be again remembered.

Alas ! the compliment of my lord, his grace, or even majesty itself, is of no avail ; for the fleeting soul disembodied, and now disencumbered of grosser matter, is ready to appear naked before the eyes of its original source ; the fountain of life, even the Father of spirits, whose it is to reward the immortal part, according to its deserts during its days of probation in this its sublunary and transitory dwelling.

Behold myriads of angels present all in waiting, ready to accomplish the order of the Deity ! Think,

O my soul, upon thy state; art thou ready to be called to-night unto the dreadful hour of divine inspection?

Such, in some measure, was the soliloquy of Cain, as Mahala entered his tent, with a countenance different from what she heretofore had assumed since their departure from the fertile plains of Salem, where she was wont to accept the chaste embrace of gentle Abel; for although Cain had no idea of the rank or distinctions of future ages, yet he had a lively sense of the frailty of the flesh, and of the doom pronounced against the life of man; therefore were his mental powers busied upon the state of mortal uncertainty, as also that of the certainty of life immortal; for of those particular matters had he heard his parents frequently converse, who had at an early period inculcated precepts of practical application into him.

The mind of Cain was capable of contemplations more sublime perhaps than the understandings of our degenerate days; hence he was conversant with the state of his dark account with the great Author of his being, and was in full confession unto the Deity giving evidence against his deeds, as Mahala entered.

No sooner had Mahala given him the morning salute, than she entertained him with the visions of her sleep. "I am convinced," said she, "that still doth part of our offspring live whom we had supposed to be devoured by the voracious animals of the wood, when on our journey from Salem hither."—And then with a long detail of particulars, she narrated those facts which she judged would corroborate the circumstances of her assertions; to which Cain paid due attention.

After various inferences drawn by either, the result thereof was thus concluded:—that in a future day, they would together visit the land of their nativity and exchange forgiveness and pardon with the first

created of men, his partner and their offspring then resident there—alluding to Adam, Eve, Thirza, as also others who were their brethren, and who, since their departure, might have been risen up to mature estate.

This conclusion being finally made, Cain and Mahala were now determined on the errand of returning once more to Salem, not however with intention to remain, but only as sojourners in the land, to pay their visit thither.

Now it was that Cain began to seek for a spot of inheritance in which to settle the posterity of his progeny; and to that intent had selected the rising mounts of seven gently swelling hills which graced the midland plain.

Enoch having now grown up to man's estate, his father gave unto him three of his daughters to be his wives, whom he took unto him and raised up a name unto his father; therefore was Cain rejoiced, and called the city which he had raised (partially erected, to be finished only by the rising generations of his offspring) after the name of his son; so that it was afterwards known by the name of the city of Enoch or Chanock, until the deluge.

A man-child was first born unto Enoch of his wife Camuelah, the first-born female in the land of Nod; therefore was an indulgence given that she might name the son she was graced with as the first fruits in the land of her nativity; and the child was called Irad, signifying the first fruits.

From him sprung a great nation; as Mehujael, the son of Irad, was the father of Methusael, of whom Lamech was born, whose wives were Adah and Zillah. The first produced Jabal, the father of those who possessed flocks, and maintained their nation in a continual camp: and unto her, who was the second, or

last taken wife, Zillah, was born Jubal, the author of melody, for he was the first who taught music unto his children; from whom sprung the science; so that all nations afterwards were charmed with their dexterity in that art of harmonious sounds called music.

Also unto Zillah was born Tubal-Cain, the first who wrought as an artificer in brass, iron, and wood, whereby carved and molten images were engraved.—Hence idols were invented.

This was he of whom the ancient writers report, that Lamech was by far more guilty than his grandsire Cain, for he slew his brethren to inherit their possessions; but for the foulness of his crimes he found not a place to repent. Therefore was he marked with the dreadful aspect of Cain; for so strongly was he marked by terror and dismay that none could look upon him without admiration and a full conviction that he was the wretched man who had shed innocent blood.

At length Cain finished as much of the city of Enoch as he judged would be necessary for his progeny during his own life, and made outlines of those buildings he wished to be completed, as in course should be wanted as they increased in number. To regulate the customs of the city, the founder had ordained such laws as he conceived would be most salutary for their internal safety and united benefit.

But what avail man's statutes and compulsory laws, where the divine precepts have not been the fundamental maxims of its structure? Like to the inexperienced seamen, who rests himself on shore within the track of the flowing tide, and in his silent slumbers of fond indulging dreams awakes in frightful surprise to find the flood assail him on every side, and sees no method of escape, and in his vain exertions sinks beneath the surfing wave; so were the edicts of Cain composed, with a tender regard of mutual in

terest and brotherly love, with affectionate regard for parents, and a tenderness for children ; yet were no commandments given to fear and serve the Lord, nor rules of conduct in that respect, which arose from the want of talents to effect that work, and plainly showed the Lord was not with those who were to occupy therein.

Many were the attempts of Cain to instil knowledge and respectful awe of the Supreme within the growing faculties of his son and daughters, as also of their offspring ; but in this he failed ; for they were now become a headstrong race : nor were they longer subject to the maternal regard and kind admonitions of their mother.

Cain was now sensible that the new settlement allotted to his offspring would be in time a city of idolatry and wickedness ; for many estranged notions from the doctrine of him and of his enlightened spouse (which were regarded as fables, and themselves as fabulists) were broached as orthodox, to be by their respective relatives attended to : nor were the host of heaven even exempted from their evil doctrine, so much were they prone to stir up the wrath of heaven to bring them to destruction.

In this falling off was the now penitent manslayer convinced that the visitation of wrath, which hung upon his head, was now transplanted and transposed with his offspring to increase in abundance :—nor was Mahala less convinced : yet she wanted knowledge of the actions of her household to be acquainted with their perverseness ; nor did she suppose their evil suggestions and inventions could devise so many branches of idolatry as those they practised. And as they daily increased in strength and years, so were their various schemes of iniquity magnified.

Mahala, being resolved to revisit her native land of Salem, reminded Cain of his promise ; to which he,

with becoming regard, gave attention. They, therefore, began to adjust their household ere they departed thence.

Cain, with a parental tenderness, summoned all his offspring to listen to his words; which they, with some entreaty, attended to hear.

Now being seated on a raised scaffold, with a solemn and manly aspect, he entreated them, who were his children and his auditors, to hear with patience the whole of his discourse, and to be edified thereby; for unto them would advice be shortly wanting; and by due respect unto his words, perhaps they might for the most part avoid the tempter's snare, who was now become a lion in his way, who feared his strength, yet waited to conquer the tender shoots of his inexperienced progeny. Having thrice called aloud unto the assembly, he begged them to be silent whilst he talked unto them for their edification: and with a solemn air he thus began:

“O my tender children, with the subtlety of the enemy of your souls little are you acquainted; to guard your minds against his seduction, I shall briefly relate unto you the remaining part of the experience of my days, with a history of those transactions which the remembrance of still weighs down my soul into the dust: for with the bitterness of anguish do I feel the pangs that arise in my breast by reason of the indiscretion of my youth. Formerly I related the particulars of the creation of my parents unto you, which you seemed to attend to with becoming respect and awful attention; but then I left untold the cause of my journeying into this distant land. And now be informed, O my children, that disobedience and regardless attention to my parents' commands were the first inlets to those vices which gave rise to all my troubles.

“My parents were equally attached to the respective

persons of their family; yet I saw with eyes of discontent and envy a partial kindness towards my only brother, and by degrees was wrought to seek his life, as the only means to establish my peace: so artfully had the fiend deceived me, to perpetrate the horrid deed of slaying my brother, for which cause I hither fled."

Here the whole assembly were moved with indignation against their parent, and showed their dislike to his conduct; but not in such sort as to raise his apprehensions into exertions for his safety. However, after some clamour of discontent, the noise subsided, and he thus continued:

"Yes, my children, I was guilty of murder,—even of fratricide; and was further tempted to add crimes equally atrocious, but was restrained through the goodness of our Creator. So now enforce this precept, that none of you be doubtful of parental tenderness, nor urge for partial regard above your brethren.

"It would little avail unto your government and direction to be acquainted minutely with my temptations; but in my precepts may you, through grace, find some guidance when I am removed far from hence, or am mingled with my native dust; for unto that condition must we all return.

"In your youthful desires you may be inclined to indulge your appetites, but be always under restraint, by your reasonable faculties, to curb those passions that would put you under subjection; for, of all others, those are the most dangerous.—Had I been under those circumspect rules, I should not have been an outcast from my native land.

"I again entreat you to avoid those loose desires which may endanger your liberty; and in your joining together, be faithful unto each other; and as soon as your seed shall be increased, let no near relative be seen to meet in the solemn connection of husband and

wife, but get you as far apart in kindred as you can with propriety extend."

Here Cain added various precepts and wholesome advice for the orderly conduct of his offspring, which took him many hours in the serious narration, admonitions, and counsels.

However, upon concluding his discourse, he found many dissatisfied ; whilst others were refractory, and disregarded the words of the narrative, or of his most wholesome counsels, or of the wisdom which, by his years and long experience, he was capable of uttering in his remarks upon various parts and particular passages of this subject ; yet he found but few inclined to adopt any of his maxims, and fewer still seemed to give credence to the words of his laws, but were directed solely by their carnal minds.

Thus Cain endeavoured to inculcate the seeds of grace within the rising plants of his production, but with what success we shall not pretend to recount, as in this regard he fell within the error of his improper indulgence to his son Encch and his daughters, who were now all become the wives of this restive son of Cain.

To set bounds unto the unsettled situation of the roaring billows might be with equal success attempted, as to guard against the excesses of Enoch's sons and daughters ; who were, with their father, heedless of the commands or injunctions of parentage, and therefore slightly regarded all the words that were, with a fond regard for their welfare, so laboriously aimed to render them service by their common father, Cain, ere he set forward for the land of Salem. More particularly, dissatisfaction arose upon the disclosure of Mahala's fond suggestion of her children that were born there being still alive, and that her desire was to add them and their increase, if Providence had so

decreed that they were still alive, and should be found by her.

Murmurings and discord ensued on hearing this intelligence ; for no roots of kind and tender affection or brotherly love grew up with his seed which sprung up in the land of Nod : for all were animated by the diabolical principle of covetousness, and selfish inclinations to protract the rise or progress of the welfare of strangers, or even of the nearest affinity, if their respective interests clashed with their own.

Such were the natural endowments of the race of Cain, who were partakers in multiplied degrees of their father's curse. Although he found grace to repent of his fall, yet his lineal descendants did not escape the contagion, but grew up as lions of the forest, to destroy the peace and happiness, and prevent the well-doing of all others who were inclined to lives of less vicious exploits than themselves.

In fine, Cain and Mahala were reduced to straits ere they could with any decorum, appease the tumult of their offspring in Nod, or get them to comply with their intentions of visiting the land of Salem.

At length these stubborn spirits yielded, after solemn protestations on the part of Cain and Mahala, that none of their offspring, born in Salem, should be conveyed to Nod on their return ; but that they their parents should sojourn there, and come thither again without any increase or addition to their family.

Having now adjusted the several matters that were found necessary previous to their departure, early upon the first day of the week did Cain and Mahala begin their journey towards the land of Salem, and were sorely grieved to see their numerous family acting only as commanders over them, by enjoining them, under penalties, to act according to their directions, and to find that no trace of filial duty was in their composition

Having directed their course to the close-tufted forest, they entered the confines of the dismal dwellings of all the fierce quadrupeds, yet with an assurance of God's grace and favour they travelled onward; and with hearts raised to heaven, to implore a continuance of that blessing, they continued their journey through the trackless deserts and lonely wastes of unknown climes.

BOOK V.

INVOCATION.—CAUSES OF THE DEGENERACY OF CAIN'S CHILDREN.
SACRIFICE OFFERED BY ADAM.—INTERVIEW OF SETH AND THIRZA.
—SETH'S DREAM.—HAPPY MEETING OF ADAM'S FAMILY.—CAIN
AND MAHALA APPROACH SALEM.—CAIN'S ADVENTURES.—WRETCH-
EDNESS OF THE GUILTY.—ILLNESS OF CAIN.—HIS PRAYER.—
HIS ADDRESS TO MAHALA.—HIS DEATH.

BE propitious, O ye powers divine! unto all those who, by their truth in seeking for the blessing of a serene conscience, shall tread the paths of religious humility, who vaunteth not herself, and is not puffed up with the emptiness of vanity,—whose swelling words are but a blast of wind never to be relied on. Be kind, ye celestial ministers, unto all your care on this terraqueous sphere; let not thy charge be forsaken, O blessed spirit, in that he stumbleth from thy direction; be thou kind and indulgent, nor report aught in thy passion that may appear in the records of the last day against thy pupil, when all the latent springs of human thought and action will be disclosed.

From the wicked no good proceedeth, nor can the bitters send forth sweetness. Shall the raven be held in estimation with the dove? or will the wolf be accepted of as the lamb? surely none of those things

can come to pass.—therefore, why is the known position of man's knowledge blindly looked into? for unto men are the treasures of the earth revealed; else, whence the progress of brethren in human knowledge proportioned in acquisition unto the labour of the student in those arts they would be proficient in : so that unto all are the capacities and means of knowledge given to obtain the precepts of wisdom and the practice of virtue; to shun vice and to abstain from folly; yet the inherent nature of frail man is guided by his appetites, and he is a slave unto his sins, his errors, and his passions.

As the tree is known by its fruits, whether good or evil, so are the offspring of the good and evil man distinguished; for unto the former, the favour shown unto the parent is not forgotten in the child; but in the latter, the wrath kindled against the father continues to blaze in opposition to the son; for of the father's iniquities which he hath committed, shall the son's visitations be in recompence; so that justice shall be satisfied in such generations.

It cannot therefore excite surprise to find the evil seed performing evil deeds (for in the days of gross imaginations and a bitterness of heart were the children of Cain begotten, nor did he return with all his heart unto his Maker until a later period); hence it may be inferred, this generation were inheritors of their father's curse, which to themselves, by evil works, they greatly magnified, and had a manifold increase.

The children of Salem were now risen at early dawn, ere the grey mantle of the russet morn had been put off, to prepare the sacrifices of the annual commencement of Adam's covenant with the Great Supreme, as an atonement for the sins of his people.

In commemorating this anniversary feast, Adam always, with due reverence, assisted: with sentiments

of grateful recollection the venerable father of men now came forth from his cottage unto the vast plain of Salem's extended borders ; and beheld his offspring with a becoming and zealous piety, attentive to make ready the altars with the sacrifices according to their numbers and respective genealogies. None were more diligently employed than Seth, who now was grown a man of mature years, and unto whom was born a numerous offspring. Thirza was also attendant on the preparation, and hailed the presence of her father. " To thee," said she, " I bow my knee, O my father ! how farest thou, my parent, and how doth my mother retain her health ?"

Adam embraced his daughter, and replied, " My child, I would say well, but thy mother's state forbids me to include her with myself, for she has spent a night of uneasiness about thy elder brother and thy elder sister, Cain and Mahala ; but why she is thus oppressed, seems to me quite strange. As she is already acquainted with God's command as to their situation being a secret to us, and that we are forbid to pry into it, yet she seems confident of being seen of them within this day !"

" Ah, my father," said Thirza, " my mind has been like to my mother's, so agitated in my sleep, that my loving spouse, the tender partner of my bosom, was in sorrow for my state of health, and would not have come hither unless I was able to bear him company, for of such fantastic flights were my senses also persuaded."

Seth now drew near, and, with reverence, bowed to Adam, to receive his father's blessing ; when Adam received him in his arms, and with all the expressions of satisfaction, resulting from piety and love, gave the son his benediction.

" My dearest wife," said Seth to Thirza, " whether art thou going from my presence ? surely no sudden

illness hath attacked thy lovely person! speak, my beloved, nor let me sink under my suspense; for my soul starts back at the idea of any danger that can affect thee!"

"Not so, my dearest husband," replied Thirza, "I am not (I thank the Supreme) with illness afflicted, nor is evil inflicted on me, but I haste to salute my mother, and pay her my morning duty; and, if thy permission's given, I shall include thy respectful duty also."

"Yes, my beloved," answered Seth! "let my reverence be attendant with thine on our mother; and tell her, that by the prophetic visitation which at times falls on me, that in my heart I have seen Cain and Mahala come forth from the land of Nod, where they and their offspring have become a nation, and in future ages shall be called the land of Canaan, deriving its name from our brother. Although at that period none of his posterity shall inherit the earth, yet shall a people of innumerable count succeed them in that land, who shall spring from Cainan, or the second Cain, who shall also bear his curse; and his posterity shall be called Canaanites, who shall feel rods of iron and shackles of brass, and be in fulness of time extirpated from off the face of the earth, and be driven into a heap of dust, there to remain until the day of wrath, when mortality receives eternal life."

Seth ceased to speak; and Eliel and Josiah, the sons of Cain before the curse (who were of Thirza's household, and acknowledged by her as the children of her bosom), were come up with their wives, the other two daughters of Cain, Jemuna and Halilah, the children found by Adam in the land of Zaara; those adopted children of Thirza, with becoming reverence inquired the cause of her uneasy hurry towards the cottage of their grandmother?—Thirza readily explained her uneasiness of mind, and then with a fervent

prayer invoked the Deity in behalf of her absent relatives; the pious children all joined in her zeal and warmth of devotion; but ere she had removed herself from the present posture, her mother, Eve, came forth in seeming health and in an unruffled state.

“All hail our mother!” cried the numerous offspring;—“be propitious, O thou Divinity, unto these our parents, and let their days be many and their years crowned with the calmness and the serenity of an even mind, but only known to tranquil hours!

Thirza then, with her usual tenderness and duty, embraced her mother; when Eve gave salutation unto her and all her children, and blessed them before the throne of heaven, and invoked the care of the Most High to watch over their ways, to secure them from peril and danger both in body and spirit; and then with a benignity of aspect sat her down upon a bed of fragrant flowers that now had oped to salute the morning sun; and in the company of her daughters waited to see the performance of the holy rites, to keep in remembrance the blessings of the Most High.

Meanwhile Thirza was not wanting in speaking the words of her own vision, as also the prophecy of Seth concerning Cain, to which Eve, her mother, gave attentive heed.

The ceremonial of the rites divine were scarcely finished, when afar off, on the point over which the sun was in his path travelling towards the west, ere he had reached his meridian ardour, the wearied son and daughter of Adam were seen marching slowly towards their parents and brethren.

The sons and daughters of Cain and Mahala, by Adam's command, set forward with the numerous train of their offspring to meet with welcome the returning pair, who were happy to obey the immediate summons on such an extraordinary occasion.

Eliel, Josiah, Jemuna, and Halilah ran with speed

to receive the blessings of their parents, which the parents, although exhausted with fatigue, readily granted, and embraced them with tears of joy, affection, love, and tenderness, and then gave thanks unto the Lord.

Being advanced into the plain, Adam and Eve hastily attended the coming of their children, seeing they were slow of foot, through the toil of many days, and with parental kindness blessed them both; nor was aught wanting to make this interview affecting, for Cain was in all respects the prodigal returned; he was convinced, and under the most true repentance for his former deeds, and on his knees, with humility of heart begged forgiveness not only of Adam, Eve, and Thirza, but from all his kindred; and then embraced each with true affection, duty, love, and tenderness.

Mahala followed her husband in embracing her relatives; and ending the salute, retired with her parents, attended by her husband, being thither accompanied by Eliel, Josiah, Jemuna, and Halilah.

Refreshments being had, the family seated at ease, Cain and Mahala gave a history of their transactions, and the occurrences and vicissitudes which had taken place since their departure out of the land; and particularly dwelt upon the heart-breaking recollection of the disobedience and undutifulness of their posterity resident in Nod, and the little hope they entertained of their reformation from the evils of their ways, notwithstanding their joint attention to inculcate precepts of filial duty and piety in their growing years, and early instruction towards edification.

Scarcely had Cain ceased to speak, when he felt a tremor seize his person, and a debility in strength, insomuch that he was incapable of rising without assistance; but this sudden illness was regarded as proceeding from extreme fatigue, therefore he was conveyed to rest.

The prisoner, who is conscious that his crimes deserve the punishments his most severe sentence can inflict, and when under the order of execution as a malefactor, endeavours to persuade his conscience to be friends, and to invite those comforts that lie beyond the grave, and with resignation awaits the hour appointed to call him to pay the debt of nature with that of his atonement for his guilt, such were the thoughts of Cain occupied; for he expected the visitation of justice, and he was certain of his deserts being only to be those where evil was to be requited; and as he had shortened the days of his righteous brother, he was certain justice would not sleep to let him enjoy a long day, if his pardon was sealed in the realms above.

The night passed without any dangerous symptoms; but the ensuing day bore evident marks and certain signs of decaying nature; his respiration was with difficulty, his pulse in unequal measure, his limbs contracted in their joints, his head and heart filled with heat and pain, and his whole frame disordered exceedingly, and sensible of sickness in the extreme.

Cain was attended by the hand and heart of his ever-faithful and loving wife; she felt each sigh and groan of his within her bosom, yet could she alleviate neither; her grief was beyond all description.

Adam, Eve, Thirza, Seth, Eliel, Josiah, Jemuna, Halilah, and all their offspring were in tears for the sudden sickness of Cain, and on their faces prostrate before Heaven, entreated the Most High to restore their beloved, lost, yet now returned prodigal, to health and peace. But while they cried aloud before the Lord, Cain, with a strength unknown to him before, arose from his bed, and then falling on his knees before the Great Creator of his soul, thus exclaimed:—

“ I thank thee, O merciful God, that thou hast

vouchsafed unto me a time of humiliation and repentance of my sins, whereby I have a lively hope in thy mercy to pardon my transgressions, and to receive me into thy presence without stain or blemish to pollute or defile thy holy sanctuary. Grant, I beseech thee, O Lord, that in this day of my dissolution I may be able to show a sign unto all these my kindred here present, that I am accepted of thee, and that the repentant sinner may hope in the hour of his departure, and that he may begin to look up to the throne of thy mercy for grace to continue, and lastly conclude the work of his salvation to the end, that he may live and not die—to be thy child and heir, and not thy foe and outcast!—This I beseech thee to grant, if it be thy divine pleasure, so that I may at my death leave an example to my posterity, while my singular case of malefaction shall convince them that there is no crime beyond thy grace and mercy to be pardoned.”

Cain arose from his knees and laid him down again upon his bed; then called for a turtle dove, commanded it to be made ready, and offered as a peace-offering in the sight of his relations, which was consumed with glorious marks of acceptance before the Lord, to the unspeakable joy of Mahala, his parents, children, and brethren. After which he embraced each with tenderness and affection; then taking his beloved wife by the hand, he thus spoke:—“My beloved and tender wife, I am now going to eternal rest, and shall presently receive the welcome of myriads of the glorious host of angels, and exchange embrace with my dear brother Abel. Know, therefore, that grief for my decease will be no service to my clay, but only hurt thy gentle nature; and as thy eyes have beheld my salvation through hope, faith, and love, let me be had in remembrance as thy friend gone before thee to the banquet, and rest with content. Let it be

thy only care to follow me whither the Lord hath called me; for though through my sins are my days shortened, yet this act of justice in a heavenly Parent is my eternal gain, and in all sinners' cases will this maxim of the Most High be always attended to. Our children in Nod leave to the direction of heaven.—Remain in Salem.—Our parents will advise thee.—So farewell, until we meet in the world of happiness.”

As he uttered these words he drew up his knees in the bed, and expired without a groan.

Notwithstanding Cain's admonition to his spouse, to refrain from immoderate grief as one having no hope, yet she could not avoid the impulses of nature, but wept in bitterness for her departed husband; nor were the whole assembly without grief on the occasion.

Eve particularly was next in sorrow unto her daughter Mahala, as she considered the works of her evil hour in bringing sin and death into the world by her transgressions, and saw her first-born a prey to those corruptions she had instituted. Therefore she was grieved the more, inasmuch as she had no abettor, but brought her husband into the culpability of her transgression, which was to fall on all her posterity, and should only be redeemed through her seed, which God had promised in Eden.

CONCLUSION

THE body of Cain was on the following day, removed from the place of his decease, and with a becoming solemnity interred beside that of his brother Abel. Thus were the remains of the two first-born of men

incorporated with the earth for the appeasing of that new-appointed sovereign of human life, that king of terrors, Death ; for, as he had absolute dominion, he gave sin an invitation, through the medium of the father of lies, the old serpent who beguiled the inhabitants of Paradise, consequently their frail offspring were liable to his attacks.

Mahala was constrained by the counsel of her parents to remain in Salem, and was blest in her children there ; and to the end of her life enjoyed the grace and loving-kindness of the Most High.

The children of Nod were the perverse generation mentioned in the holy scriptures, for whose account the world was destroyed by a deluge, and only the seed of Seth preserved in Noah.

From this example let the agents of sin and the corrupt in mind be convinced that this life is but a probationary state ; and agreeable to the race they run here, the same rewards and punishments will be given as their works in the flesh deserve ; whether by repentance they obtain the former, or by negligence they receive the latter. As the time is precious, it behoves the transgressor to redeem it, and work while the day remains, for in the night no man can work ; so that in the grave there is no repentance ; for on the uncertainty of time and repentance is the whole of an endless eternity of joy or sorrows depending. O my brethren, let no deceits hinder your eternal happiness ; but be wise unto salvation !—Amen.

THE
LIFE OF JOSEPH,

THE
SON OF ISRAEL:

In Eight Books.

CHIEFLY DESIGNED TO ALLURE YOUNG MINDS TO A LOVE OF THE
SACRED SCRIPTURES.

BY JOHN MACGOWAN.

RECOMMENDATION

THIS History of the Young Hebrew, so celebrated for his Chastity, his Wisdom, and the Vicissitudes of his Fortune, may be exhibited as a fit Companion for Mr. Gesner's Death of Abel.

Vide Monthly Review, Oct. 1771.

P R E F A C E

TO

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH.

WHEN a new Book is ushered into the world, if it has the happiness either to please or displease, there is great enquiry made after the author: and, as I think it would be a pity to forbid the world this pleasing itch of inquiry, I forbear putting my name * to the Life of Joseph, till such time as this curiosity hath in some measure spent itself. Yet not to leave the reader altogether in the dark about who and what the author is, I shall give him a negative or two.

He is not then a writer who cannot err; for he thinks it possible for him now and then to be guilty of mistakes, in sentiment as well as literature. Consequently,

He is none of that class whose *ipse dixit* is the pure standard of orthodoxy. But he has one thing to say for himself, which will weigh a great deal with people of sense and candour; and that is, that the Life of Joseph is wrote as well as he could do it; for could he have done it better, he had never sent it into the world as it is: for it was not wrested from him by force, neither got out of his hands by clandestine means; by those who were eager to see it in print, before he had time to put the finishing hand to it, as has been the unhappiness of some other authors. He can assure the reader, that had his ability bore any tolerable proportion to his time and opportunity, the present production had been without blemish.

But why did I choose any part of sacred history for my theme, will be next asked? Did you not know that the Bible has been laid in a great measure aside for many years past? and that the people of fashion will condemn it, if it was for nothing else but being akin to scripture? Yes, I know it very well; but because I have not seen a better book substituted in its room, I would gladly have the use of the Bible revived again. If writers were all agreed to keep to Bible subjects, of course the readers must; for they can only ramble as they are led by their author. The sacred volume is fertile of subjects, calculated both to please and instruct, when let down, by proper elucidation, within the reach of young capacities.

It is to the rising generation (whose felicity I can say I have very

* The Author's name was not prefixed to the first edition.

much at heart) I look for friends. If I can but get their good opinion, I care not who else snarl at the *Life of Joseph*. I have been much conversant with the geniuses and tempers of young ones, both in my own family of seven children, and in a much larger sphere of action; and have had frequent occasion to mark with regret, that the harsh and severe methods which many take with a view to form the young mind to agreeable habits, have quite the contrary tendency. I have an utter aversion to the crabbed countenance of the cynical pedagogue, who has no other way of imparting instruction but upon the end of his cane, or face of his ferula. If the terrible man, and terrible he is to the little lovely creatures, who shrink as it were into nothing, and shudder at his tremendous menace, would only consider that it is impossible to divide hatred from servile fear, he would perhaps see it necessary to aim at gaining the affection of his young pupils, in order to insure his own success. Or if he himself would go to school to common sense, and learn to dress virtue in its native attractions, and learning in its own innate loveliness, he might spare the labour of the cane and ferula, enjoy the love and esteem of his pupils, instead of their dread and hatred, and return them to their parents, good proficient in useful learning, instead of branding them with the infamous name of dunce.—A name, however, that always proclaims the master's incapacity to teach; and but very seldom want of ability in the boy to learn. Want of ability to learn is very rarely the case, and want of inclination would be much seldomer found than it is, if care was taken to entertain the fancy whilst we would inform the understanding. If learning was made to resemble play rather than slavery, it would become a pleasure instead of a burden. I never yet found that I could succeed by mere precept and penalty; but if I was happy enough to hit upon the turn of my pupil's fancy, I never failed of the desired success. Fancy is an active principle, and will be employed, though in different subjects it operates variously.

The *Life of Joseph* is designed to entertain my young reader, without vitiating his mind. By setting before him one of the most amiable of sacred characters, in the person of Joseph, the hero of the story, I am not aware of having at all departed from the spirit of the text, nor from the rules of probability.

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH,

BOOK I.

Jacob's history of his own life and that of his father's.—Joseph's reflections upon it.—His first dream.—His brethren's envy.—Judah and Simeon's reflections upon Joseph's dream.—Reuben endeavours to remove their jealousy.—Belphegor's resolution to blow the flame.—Simeon's dream inspired by that devil.—Joseph's second dream.—His brethren's resolution to murder him.—The patriarch's care about his sons.—Joseph sent to inquire after their welfare.—A Canaanite invites him to his tent, where he dreams an alarming dream.—He departs for Dothan.—His brethren consult about putting him to death.—Reuben interposeth, and is upbraided.—Joseph intercedes for his life in vain.—Endeavours to move their pity.—Reuben diverts his brethren's purpose, and persuades them to cast him into a pit.—Joseph prays in the pit.—Abel, the protomartyr, appears to him, comforts and instructs him.

It was at the end of autumn, when the bounties of Providence were safely gathered in, that venerable Jacob entertained his convened family with the history of his own life, and the lives of his father Isaac, and Abraham his grandfather. A story so full of interesting incidents, related in a manner truly pathetic, sometimes excited the friendly tear, and at others the cheerful smile, upon the countenances of his audience. None was more affected than pious Joseph, who seemed earnestly to catch every syllable in the narration; little Benjamin indeed, marking the emotions of his brethren's hearts, by their countenances, gave

undoubted tokens of filial piety, as well as his elders. Joseph, lovely Rachel's eldest born, was employed in contemplating the vicissitudes experienced by his revered parent, and could not forbear sympathizing with him in every part of the history, whilst tears bright as orient pearls ran down his cheek. Even when alone, he could not but ruminate on the wisdom and goodness of the God of heaven, in setting virtuous Jacob before Esau the profane, notwithstanding nature and Isaac's choice seemed to have designed otherwise. Says he to himself when alone, "Raw and unexperienced as I am, young and untaught either in the mysteries of religion, or the mazes of deceit among men of this world, I can see a very wide difference between my father and my uncle Esau. A greater difference there was not between the roughness of the latter, and the delicacy of the former, when examined by experienced Isaac's careful touch, than there is between their two minds, formed so very different from one another. And who made, or could make the difference but God, from whom the spirit of life originally came, and who formed them both in the same maternal womb. I adore thee, O my God, that the promise is with my father Jacob." Often did he reflect with pleasure and delight on the gracious visits, which the patriarch received from the Almighty at Bethel and Peniel. "Oh," said he, "that this same God, the God of my father, may be with me, even as he hath been with him! that this God may be my God in the land of the living, and my guide and portion for ever and ever."

Thus meditating on the changes through which Providence had brought his father, and earnestly imploring grace to imitate the patriarchal conduct, he was seized by the lulling charms of balmy rest, and sunk beneath the superiority of the angel of drowsiness. As he slept, he dreamed, and lo! all

LIFE OF JOSEPH.



*"And behold your sheaves stood round about, and
made obeisance to my sheaf."*

his brethren and he were together in the neighbouring field, laboriously reaping the nodding harvest; when, to his amazement, the sheaf which he had last reaped stood upright in the midst, as a governor; and all his brethren's sheaves, as so many loyal subjects, hastened to pay their court, falling down prostrate before it. Unacquainted with malice and envy, and not knowing but his brethren were as free from it as himself, he very innocently told them his dream: but, alas! the distinguished regard at all times shewed him by his indulgent parent had already called up the demons of malice and envy to possess their unequal hearts. They heard him with attention, and felt the impression in their hearts, but could not hinder the disagreeable sensation from discovering itself on their countenances; so sure an index is the countenance to the heart. He, as a youth who loves instruction, asked them what could be the meaning of such a dream? But they disguised their apprehension, and with affected disdain turned from him, telling him they understood nothing of the matter. But no sooner was he departed from them, than they entered into consultation among themselves, relating to the affair. Judas first began, "My brethren," said he, "the dream which the youth has related to us, however innocent and thoughtless he may be respecting it, the event appears to me something more than the influence of mere imagination; and if my judgment is not misled, it is ominous of superior dignity in the person of Joseph, or the dominion of his seed over the children of his father."—"For my own part," returned Simeon, "I consider the whole as the fruit of ambition; you know he has been fostered up in a vain conceit of himself, by the overweening fondness of an indulgent and doting parent. Seeing himself placed first in the paternal affections, who knows but his pretended dream is a scheme concerted to root him-

self the deeper in his father's heart, with a view to supplant us of the patriarchal blessing, as our father did our uncle Esau? Or if he really did dream what he has now related, is it not pretty plain from thence, that it is owing to his mind running upon the wished for dominion?" Reuben now rejoined his brother Simeon thus: "the patriarch's partiality towards Joseph can never be justified; for, if brethren are expected to dwell in unity, there must be an equality among them; partiality in a parent being the seed of certain dissensions among his children. Yet we ought to do the boy justice, he is truly lovely in his person; even in his opening graces, you may see all the beauty of his mother, mingled with the masculine gravity of our renowned father; besides, his temper is amiable and mild, his manners sweet and attractive: let us not then load the good man with reproach, even if he should love our brother with superior regard. Our father was put before his elder brother, and thereby the promise descends to us; let us not then too hastily condemn the youth, before we know what the Almighty will do with him."

Thus reasoned the sons of Jacob, whilst Belphegor, an angel of the damned race, implacable in his hatred against mankind in general, and especially against the children of the promise, returning from a detestable incursion in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, drew near, and hovered in the air over their heads, to acquaint himself with their circumstances, the better to embitter their lot, if not precipitate them into ruin. He was a witness to the perturbation of Simeon's heart, and resolved that the flame, already kindled, should not die, whilst it was in his power to throw oil upon it. What the malignant spirit aimed at was to excite him to embrue his hands in Joseph's youthful blood, as before he had done in that of the Shechemites; which, as he concluded, if executed, would

answer infernal purposes in divers respects; that it would bring down the holy patriarch with sorrow to the grave; it would bring an everlasting reproach upon the chosen race; and, it might provoke a just God to visit them with some terrible judgment. To accomplish this with the greater facility, he resolved to impose upon his senses by a dream: for which purpose he watched him in his tent, and perceiving him in a deep sleep, he first breathed upon his eyes an hellish damp, that diffused darkness and horror through his whole soul. Then directing his views to futurity, he discovered Joseph in a chair of state, himself and his brethren prostrate before him, entreating mercy at his hands; by and by he finds himself bound in fetters, in the presence of his brethren, and cast into a dungeon; now he sees his own seed, the drudging menials of the seed of Joseph. The name of Joseph is extolled to the heavens, and those of his brethren mentioned but with coolness; and some of them, particularly his own, with abhorrence. Withal, he saw the behaviour of Joseph's children to be haughty and tyrannical to their enslaved brethren. So did the parent of error mislead his judgment, by the delusion of a hell-inspired dream. Simeon awoke in the morning, and addressed himself to his pastoral care, following the fleecy race as they cropped the verdant herbage; but a sullen pensiveness was settled on his countenance, the cause of which he chose not as yet to reveal.

In the mean while Joseph grew in stature, in the affection of his father, and the fear of his God. And, ere long, he dreamed again a dream of the same import with the former. He fancied himself in a pleasant meadow, covered with the freshest verdure, bespangled with the many coloured stains of natural dye; the lion, the leopard, and panther, were hid in

silence in their lonesome retreats; their nocturnal prowlings in the desert were suspended, and only the voice of the nightingale was heard. As he walked along, admiring the beauties of nature, and adoring the supreme Creator, he perceived an uncommon motion among the celestial spheres; the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars, flew swiftly from their orbits, and came and made obeisance to him. The next day, after evening oblations were offered up, and Jacob's family convened to supper, such as the simplicity of those days admitted of; unsuspecting, Joseph told his dream before them all. His father heard with thoughtful attention, yet deemed it prudent to conceal for the present his thoughts, not knowing what envy it might excite among his brethren, and therefore gave him a slight rebuke, by saying, "Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren, indeed, come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" The dream and interpretation of it had both taken possession of the patriarch's mind; and, notwithstanding his reproof to Joseph, he pondered it in his heart, and considered it as divinely inspired, portending some important event.

It was quite otherwise with Joseph's brethren: this last brought the former dream afresh into their minds, and they began to fancy themselves as almost in servitude to their brother already. The repetition of the dream increased their envy, and alarmed their apprehensions; especially when Simeon, who had concealed his dream until now, had related it to them. They considered the whole as fixed by fate, and saw but one way to prevent the execution of the decree; and that was (horrid to name!) to cut short his period of life, as if there had not been blood enough already upon their guilty souls. Strange indeed, that the parents of the chosen seed should be found contending with

their God, and striving to prevent the execution of his purposes! How unsearchable are the ways of the Most High! and his judgments past finding out!

They now departed to their rural employment; first to Shechem, where the herbage was soon devoured, and from thence to Dothan, where there was plenty of grass, and shelter for their cattle. Unfurnished with that dutiful regard, due to so good a father, their departure was concealed from him; whether from thoughtlessness, or with a view to find occasion to destroy Joseph, I pretend not to say: but their absence filled the patriarch's mind with solicitous concern for their welfare; wherefore he resolved to send his beloved Joseph in quest of them, to learn their situation. In the mean while, being arrived in Dothan, they consult together what methods to take to prevent the grandeur of their detested brother; and his death was determined on by the majority. Thus sin at first discovered itself to be exceeding sinful by the horrid act of fratricide; and now the issue of this counsel was, that brethren should shed their brother's blood, and that without so much as the allegation of guilt against him.

Joseph was dispatched by his father to inquire after the health of his brethren, a task which was extremely agreeable to a mind like his, formed to offices of benevolence. First he went to Shechem, where he expected to have found them; but, instead of them, he met with a stranger, who seeing a comely young man wandering in the fields, drew near, and thus accosted him: "Young man, if I mistake not, you are a stranger in these parts, wandering in quest of some desired object: I am a native of this country, and if you will be pleased to command me, I am ready to serve you to the utmost of my power. It is the will of heaven that we should not be neglectful of strangers, but perform all offices of good-will towards

them, and we find our account in obeying the precept, for the God of heaven is the guardian of strangers." Joseph, affected with the good-will of this stranger, meekly replied; "My friend, for such your sentiments bespeak you, I am here at this time in search of my brethren, who should be feeding their flocks near to this place; I shall take it kind if you can inform me whereabouts they are."—"If," replied the stranger, "you mean the ten sons of Israel, the Hebrew, I can help you in this matter, for it is but three days since I was with them upon business; when finding the adjacent pastures consumed by their numerous flocks, I heard them conclude upon going to Dothan, where the earth produceth herbage in the richest luxuriance.

"If you are brother to these godlike shepherds, let me prevail with you to refresh yourself in my tent, which is at no great distance; and in the morning as soon as the cheerful sun illumines our horizon, you shall depart in peace." The day being far advanced, and the sable evening drawing near, our youthful hero accepted of the kind invitation, and slept in the tent of the Canaanite. Retiring to rest, his dreams came into his mind, earnestly he wished for the interpretation of them; but, amidst his contemplations, he fell asleep, and dreamed one of a very different nature. He fancied himself wandering in an unknown field, amidst the nocturnal gloom; sun, moon, and stars, having hid their radiance in the destiny of the atmosphere. Pensive and melancholy he wandered with painful steps he knew not whither. No voice was heard but that of beasts of prey, upon their nightly ravages; the growling of the lion, and hooting of the bird of darkness, were the only music that saluted his ear. Ere he was aware, he fell into an horrible pit, inhabited by hissing snakes, and other deadly reptiles; and, in the fall, his many-coloured coat was torn piece-meal, and hung upon the bushes over him. He

had but just reached the bottom when two monstrous adders warped themselves about his legs, which frightened him so that he awoke and rejoiced that it was but a dream. Some benevolent spirit of the ethereal race, having heard the malevolent consultations of his brethren, might take this method of apprising him of some danger near at hand, that he might guard himself against their bloody designs. But Joseph's friendly heart was incapable of suspicion. He would have deemed it a crime in him never to be forgiven, to have entertained, but for a moment, the least jealousy of their humanity. Had integrity and uprightness equally governed the rest of thy sons, O Jacob! what scenes of sorrow wouldst thou have escaped, and how gently would time have conducted thee through the decline of life?

The reverse of Joseph's disposition was their's; for the moment they saw him afar off, they renewed their determination against him to destroy him, and by one bold stroke to free themselves from the fear of his future advancement. "According to our wish," cried raptured Levi, "he comes; behold this dreamer cometh!" Returned Simeon, "Now is the time, brethren, let us put him to death, and see what will become of his dreams."—"Not so," replied Reuben: "how shall we, who have the adoption and covenant, we who are the seed of the promise, be guilty of fratricide? What! shall we who are called to lift up holy hands, and to offer pure oblations to the God of heaven, stain our souls with the blood of an innocent brother? Remember, brethren, the blood of Abel cried from the earth to the Lord, to whom vengeance belongs; and will not the blood of Joseph rouse the wrath of the Omnipotent? and who shall escape when an avenging God pursueth? Is our father partial in favour of the youth, the fault is not with him. Envy itself must confess his merit. Are his dreams ominous

of his future greatness; cannot Joseph be great without our being slaves to him? Shall we slay our brother for the licentious roving of unbridled imagination?—Who can answer for dreams? Could we even convict him of ambition, might not his youth and inexperience in some measure plead his excuse? Further experience, growing acquaintance with men and things, would teach him that man is not originally designed for slavery. Let the old man our father plead for his Joseph. His life is wrapt up in that of his child. And will you dare to murder the father in the son, and pierce his heart through the blood of his Joseph? Think of our father, my brethren; see him weeping a detested life away over his murdered son, murdered by the begotten of his father: murdered by the very men in whom he confided without reserve. Let the fear of God, and the love due to so venerable a father, be advocates for his helpless youth; and let me never see the evil that shall, by this villainous barbarity, be brought upon Israel, the favourite of heaven.”

“Is this Reuben,” with malicious irony, cried Levi, “Reuben the first-born of Jacob? The pious Reuben, who in a phrenzy of brutal lust crept into his father’s bed and defiled it? Where was thy fear of God, thy love and veneration for thy father then? Art thou our dictator? Thou who couldest not spare even thy father’s wife, all of a sudden become so pious? Art thou so careful for thy father’s life, thou who alone hadst audacity to cuckold him! Let shame for ever shut Reuben’s mouth, and leave it to good men to be advocates for virtue.”

“Your invective, my brother,” said Reuben, “stings me with the keenest remorse. I own the charge to be just, and cannot forget the evil of my sin. I have dishonoured my God, my father, and myself; and have left thereby an indelible stain on my offspring to the latest generation. But the heavy days, and the many

sleepless nights, that this foul miscarriage has cost me, though they can never extenuate my highly aggravated guilt from before the God of Jacob, might in some measure exempt me from the upbraidings of my brethren. Believe me, Levi, my own conscience serves as a thousand reprovers, and needs not your cruel assistance. Yet it is just, my brother, and I cannot resent it. But my former impiety is indeed the reason wherefore I cannot fall into your bloody measures. My conscience too, loudly tells me that I have guilt enough upon my soul already, without contracting more in such a horrid manner as this which Simeon has prescribed; that I have already been the cause of more than enough of sorrow to my dear and honoured father, without joining in the murder of his son, to bring down his venerable, hoary head, with insupportable sorrow to the grave. He whose conscience groans under the weight of incestuous adultery, has little need to add to the burden the tremendous weight of innocent blood. I cannot therefore consent to the deed."

"The indelible stain which Reuben, by his own confession, hath fixed on himself and offspring, may reconcile the baseness of his mind to slavery," said Simeon; "but our seed is free, and not born to servitude. Therefore Joseph by my advice shall die: if pious and reformed Reuben will not consent to his death, he dies along with him. Why should he live to be able to accuse us to our father? One condition, and only one, if you are all agreed, I would have offered to Reuben: if he agrees to that he lives, and if not, he and Joseph die together; for he shall never be the publisher of our guilt. Let Reuben become our accomplice, otherwise bind himself by an oath to the most inviolate secrecy. By this alone can he hope to prolong his life. Speak, Reuben, do you accept the conditions?"

“ Give me till to-morrow about this time to consider of it, and then you shall have my answer,” replied Jacob’s elder-born.

“ One hour, and no more, we grant ; at which time we expect your answer,” rejoined the brethren in wickedness.

By this time Joseph came nigh to his brethren ; and, smiling with delight at having found them all together, came near to embrace them, and inquire after their health. But what inexpressible surprise seized him, when, instead of returning his caresses, they turned away from him, and shook him off, with vengeance louring on their countenances. Instantly he is seized, stript of his rich party-coloured coat, and fettered both hands and feet. Alarmed, Reuben cried, “ Stop, stay your hand but one hour, the hour promised, and ye shall then have my answer.” All agreed that one hour and no more should be granted ere Joseph was put to death : and Reuben, casting a look of despair and pity on his fettered brother, “ I wish,” said he, “ your duty to your father, and love to your brethren, could have admitted your staying at home, instead of visiting these men, who are bent upon your destruction ;” so saying, he precipitately withdrew to consider what answer he should deliver to his brethren.

The elder brother gone, and Joseph, enclosed amidst his sanguinary brethren, like an helpless lamb amongst so many voracious wolves, was thus addressed by one of them : “ Ambitious youth ! think now of your state : one hour elapsed, and the tide of your ambition is for ever stemmed ; one hour puts a period to your life, which is forfeited to our liberty. Die you must, and shall, if fate had decreed the contrary.” He replied “ Had I known the malignity of your intentions, I might have avoided the snare ; but duty to my father and to my brethren, and therefore duty to my God brings me here ; if he hath led me hither for slaughter.

I ought, I must submit ; but if my God sees it for the honour of his majesty to preserve me, he hath power to change your purposes, as he turns the rivers of water, or may point out means whereby I may be delivered from your vengeance. Tell me what I have done, wherein I have offended you ; if I have erred it is unwittingly, and it is hard to be put to death for inadvertency. Make known my faults ; and, if I reform them not, let loose your fury upon me. But I adjure you by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that ye slay me not unconvicted. If I have wronged any of you, I am willing to make restitution to the utmost ; if I have offended, to submit myself, and to implore forgiveness : but O ! cut me not off in my youth, before I arrive at the state of manhood !”—
 “ Yes, youngster,” replied Simeon, “ you have wronged us so, that you cannot make restitution. You have stolen the affections of a partial father, which you cannot restore ! you have set yourself up, by your pretended dreams as our lord and governor ; you have made us and our children, yea, and our father himself, to do homage to your pride ; but we shall soon see what your greatness will come to. You shall not live to triumph over your enslaved brethren ; die you must !”

“ Alas ! must I then die for my dreams ! Which of you has the government of his fancy whilst asleep ? O Simeon ! my brother Simeon, could I help my dreams ? I little thought that they would have given offence to any of you when I innocently related them. I want no superiority ; I account myself unworthy even of equal regard, much more so of superior esteem. If my father shews any partiality towards me, it is for my mother’s sake, and not for any thing in me. And must I die for any little partiality in my father ? Make the case your own, my dear Simeon : would you like to be put to death for any roving of your dreaming

imaginations? To be murdered in cold blood for what you could not possibly help? If I must die for having dreamed a dream, which you think portends felicity and greatness, give me leave to relate to you one that I dreamed last night: if the former excited your anger and resentment, the latter may as justly entitle me to your compassion and sympathy." Leave obtained, he related the dream he had in the tent of the Canaanite, which his brethren heard with rising indignation: and as soon as he had finished, Simeon spoke to his brethren with fury flashing from his eyes: "This dream is an artful contrivance of the insolent wretch, to fix a lasting reproach upon us, and upon our seed. We, my brethren, are intended by the deadly serpents: perhaps I myself am meant by one of the adders that warped themselves about his legs, and wakened him in such a fright: but why do we suffer him to prate any longer? One stroke of my scimitar will put an end to his insolence. Ambitious wretch! thou shalt prate no more." Here he drew his sword, and rushed up to have cloven the stripling in twain; but Judah caught him in his arms, and cried, "Stop, stop, my Simeon. Remember the promise we have just now made to Reuben; wait the time, and let us see what resolution he comes to."

"O Judah!" cried Joseph, "Judah, my honoured brother: thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: May I hope to find an intercessor in thee? What if thy sons, either Er or Onan, were in the same condition in which thou seest me? How would thy bowels yearn over them! See their distress in mine: feel my father's affliction in thine own: act a faithful part in delivering me from my enraged brethren, who are this day risen up against me without a cause. O Judah! let me owe my life, and all the happiness of it, to a brother so honourable in the house of his father. And you, O Simeon and Levi! think, think of the guilt

ye will bring upon yourselves by perpetrating a deed so horrid ! Ye may escape punishment from the hand of man, but assure yourselves ye will not escape from the hand of God. For judgment is his, and he will repay it either in this life, or that which is to come."

Thus Joseph interceded for a life, now indeed rendered wretched by the unkind behaviour of his father's sons, more out of desire to dissuade them from contracting fresh guilt, than from any dread that he had of death, or what should follow after it ; whilst Reuben retired behind a neighbouring thicket, to pour out the bitterness of his soul before God, and pray to be directed what part he should act in the present iniquitous affair. How shall I act, said he ? If I consent, I bring guilt upon my own soul, and add murder to my incest. If I do not consent, my life is forfeited to the jealousy of my brethren, who will never be easy whilst I am alive, let me be tied to secresy by what oath soever. Surrounded by evils, prudence dictates to chuse the least, that thereby we may escape the greater. I must at all events endeavour to save the boy's life : in order to which I must consent to his death, and may perhaps win so far upon his enemies, as to leave the manner of his death to me. His heart was divided between the thoughts of his own safety and Joseph's ; the sorrow which he foresaw ready to fall upon his aged father, and the guilt just about to be contracted by his brethren ; but still he steadily determined to use his best endeavours for the safety of the youth. With this resolution, although dissembled, he returned to the rest seemingly with a placid countenance, and thus addressed them : " My brethren, I am now ready to concur with your measures, and even to be active therein, upon one small condition being granted me ; which is, that instead of shedding his blood, we confine him till death in yonder pit, on the other side of the pasture."—" Agreed," replied his brethren, " so

that he dies, no matter how. And hereby Reuben makes himself not only an accomplice, but a principal actor in the tragedy. Away with him to the pit, and there let the sun, moon, and stars, pay their court to him as their governor."

At this instant, they hurried him away to the proposed pit, whilst he, in anguish of heart, summoned them all to meet him hereafter before the judgment-seat of the King of kings, where he assured them he should have justice done him. This appeal he designed as a means of conviction, whereby his brethren might be brought to repentance that their sins might be blotted out, when times of refreshing should come from the presence of the Lord.

Joseph, now let down into the pit, Reuben rejoiced in hope of having it in his power to deliver him safe the ensuing night to his good old father, whose heart he knew must pant with painful anxiety till his return. Having determined upon this salutary project, he left him there, and went to dispatch some pastoral business among the menial herdsmen, at a different part of the wilderness, purposing ere long to return. In the meanwhile, Joseph having nothing but death to expect, and hardly even desiring any thing else, lifted up his soul in fervent prayer to the God of his salvation. "Thou God," he cried, "whose presence fills immensity itself; whose eyes see and whose eyelids try the the actions and hearts of men; thou must of necessity be present here, and witness to all my treatment from my brethren. So far as the appointment is thine, I desire cheerfully to submit to it, and own thy conduct just, as I have deserved a thousand deaths ere now. But, Lord, my brethren's motives differ from thine as far as east from west; for envy do they now rise up against me. Here I am in all appearance shut up for certain death. My God, let not my blood be charged upon the sons of my father. My God, forgive

their iniquity. And, O Lord, do thou support my aged father under the pangs of sorrow, which he will from his paternal fondness necessarily feel. Support him, O my God, and give him strength to bear his affliction in my loss, becoming the parent of the chosen race. Here I am, thou God of heaven and earth. I must die if thou interpose not. If death is designed for me, help me to bear it with humble resignation; but, Lord, if thou pleaseth to prolong a life altogether insignificant, thou hast the means in thine own hand. Use them as will be most for thy glory." Here he was surprised by an uncommon radiance, which diffused itself through the place. A splendour which overcame him with the sweetest sensation, and gave his enraptured soul a large taste of ethereal felicity. The amazing brightness a little diminished, so far as to enable mortal eyes to endure it, there stood a blooming youth confest to his view. The instant the celestial visitant discovered himself, he thus accosted the son of Jacob: "I am sent by my God and thine; I am sent to inform thee that he is well acquainted with all thy afflictions, and perfectly knows thy present distress. Not Jehovah only, but the host of heaven in general are witnesses of thy misery. The celestial legions bowed over the brow of heaven, and beheld the baleful deed with as much uneasiness and fearful apprehension for thee, as celestial spirits are capable of, till the purpose of the Eternal was revealed. But this calmed every mind, and the sovereign will of thy God reconciled in an instant the will of myriads. I am Abel the protomartyr; I fell, my Joseph, by the hand of my brother Cain, and the day of my fall was the day of my exaltation. O Joseph, did you but know the joys prepared for those that love the Lord, you would not wish to prolong life a moment. But your time is not come. You are designed to foster infant Israel under the shadow of your wings. You must be sold into Egypt to govern that

fertile land, and provide sustenance for the seed of the promise. Even to day you must begone ; for thy God makes use of thy brethren's jealousy for this very purpose. Only remember, that when thou art in Egypt, thou wilt be tempted ; but keep it ever in thy mind that the God of the Hebrews sent thee thither. There shall thy brethren bow down to thee. There shalt thou embrace thy father, and there shall Benjamin fall upon thy neck, and shed the fraternal tear. Be not careful about thy father's affliction. Leave him to his God, he shall be supported and brought through. When the day is thine, think well of thy brother Reuben, he had thee here purposely to deliver thee, but he must see thee no more, till you meet in the court of Pharaoh. I leave thee, Joseph ; the peace of thy God go with thee."

BOOK II.

Joseph taken out of the pit—Sold to Alvah an Ishmaelite—Reuben returns to the pit—His lamentation—He chargeth the murder upon his brethren—Judah repents of what was done, and informs Reuben—They send out messengers to overtake him, and bring him back—An angel appears to Reuben and comforts him—They dip Joseph's coat in blood, and send it to Jacob—Jacob's grief and Dinah's despair—Joseph's arrival in Egypt—The friendly treatment he meets with from Alvah—He chooseth to abide in Egypt—Potiphar sees him on the mart, and conceives a liking to him—Purchases him, and presents him to Sabrina, his new married lady—A grand hunting match in the desert—Joseph kills a lion, and delivers his mistress—Sabrina conceives a violent passion for him—Gabriel inspires Joseph with a dream, ominous of danger—His prosperity—Joseph saves his mistress a second time from a band of Arabs—His mistress's passion thereby greatly inflamed.

ABSORBED in thought the son of Israel lay, after the heavenly vision was departed, when Judah came to the brim of the pit, and calling Joseph by name, let down a rope which he ordered him to tie about his body

below his arms ; then he and his brethren drew him out of the pit, and led him to a numerous caravan of merchants, going from Gilead to Egypt, with myrrh, balm, and spicery. Confident in the word of the heavenly messenger he ascended out of the pit, dreading no evil, and suffered himself to be sold to Alvah, the chief of the company, for twenty pieces of silver. The youthful beauty and mature understanding of our hero, equally conspired to endear him to his master, who soon employed him in the government of his camels, with whom we leave him whilst we follow Reuben from the distant field to the pit. “ Joseph, my brother, Joseph,” he cried, but Joseph made no answer ; he repeated the doleful invitation, but still no voice was heard. He rent his garments, tore his hair, and roamed about the brink of the pit in the greatest anguish of soul, and thought to throw himself down into it, and die with his lost brother. At last, having spent himself to no purpose, he called Joseph’s last dream to remembrance, and dreaded its being literally fulfilled. Then he thought again, can my brethren have treacherously murdered him in the absence of his friend. O false and dreadful brethren ! cruel and bloody men ! to shed the blood of the innocent, contrary to solemn contract. Racked with despair and glowing resentment, he reasoned within himself, whether it were not best to rush upon his brethren and plunge his dagger in each of their hearts, one by one, till he himself should perish upon the point of their swords. In one minute he was fully bent upon the bloody purpose ; in the next, the horrors of an agonizing parent, expiring over his murdered family, pierced him to the heart. Then he cried, “ O my father, my father, how wretchedly I am deceived ! I thought to have been happy in making some atonement for my past guilt, by delivering thy darling from his murderous brethren, and restoring him safe to thy fond

embrace. But, ah! I am deceived! Joseph is lost! irretrievably lost! And what sorrows will wring the heart of my parent, when he learns that Joseph is no more. O my Joseph! gladly would I revenge thy blood upon thy murderers. But, alas! the loss of one is more than enough for a tender parent to bear. How would his aged heart sink under the carnage which this arm would make, should I give scope to my just revenge! But, O my father, my father! for thy sake I live, and leave it to God to avenge the death of thy son." So saying, he went up to his brethren, grief and resentment sparkling in his eyes.

"False men, where is the lad? Where is Joseph? Could you not withhold your bloody hands from him for one night, that the unhappy youth might have had time to pour out his heart unto his God? But, alas! he is gone! and I, whither shall I fly? How shall I answer to his father for his untimely death? What agonies must the good man feel when he hears that Joseph is no more! O my father! O Joseph! my poor Joseph!" So saying, his overswelled heart breaks forth in gushing sorrow, which trickled down his manly cheeks like chrystal waters from the diamond rock. But surely never did tears better become the masculine countenance than now! Such was the anguish of Reuben's spirit, that, like a contagion his grief reached the hearts of his brethren; and even Simeon himself, felt for a moment, something like remorse. A solemn silence reigned in the whole assembly.

Judah at last broke through the gloom that covered them, and addressed Reuben. "My brother, permit your sorrow to subside; suffer your reason to supercede your passion, and coolly hear what I have to offer. I am now thoroughly convinced that what we have done is wrong, notwithstanding Joseph is yet alive." Reuben quickly replied, "If he lives let me

set my eyes upon him that my heart may be at rest.”—“Alas!” said Judah, “though he lives, I cannot present him to you. For I, even I, to save his life, advised to sell him to some Midianitish merchants, who passed by here in your absence. This is done and cannot be undone, or it should. And I am now more convinced than ever, that he will live to see his dreams fulfilled, and his brethren to bow down unto him. Yes, my brethren, his last night’s dream has been amply verified; for, it may be truly said, he fell into a pit of serpents, even in the house of his father. I feel within me some monitor telling me, that God, who weighs the actions of men in an even balance, will visit and punish my having concurred in separating Joseph from his father and brethren, by the judicial death of my own children. O that it was undone again, and that we had it in our power to restore him to his father.”

All the brethren heartily concurred in Judah’s sentiments, Simeon alone excepted. “For his part,” he said, “all that he grieved at was, that they had suffered him to escape, and leave him within the possibility of superiority. When we had him,” said he, “it was madness to let him go.”—“I would not for the world,” said the rest of his brethren, “Simeon, that it had been as you would have wished it.” But Reuben flew from his place like lightning, and would instantly have killed Simeon; but that Naphtali, who perceived from his countenance the effect that Simeon’s sanguinary speech had made upon his heart, arose with the swiftness of a hind, caught his elder brother by the arm, and begged for Jacob’s sake that he would moderate his passion. Again composed, the brethren consult how they may strive to regain their lost brother. It was agreed to send out messengers, early in the morning, to overtake the Ishmaelites, offer to Alvah the price given for Joseph, and as much more

as might procure his release. This agreed upon, and messengers appointed for the negotiation, they all retired to rest, every one with his servants to his separate tent. Reuben was just laid down, and striving to compose himself to rest, when a dazzling glory shone through all the tent, and a voice more than human called him by name—"Reuben, Reuben, first-born of Israel, hear my words, and attend unto my speech. You mourn for Joseph, and not without cause, considering the occasion of his exile. But know this, that he is the peculiar care of his God, who is with him wherever he goes, and who will make whatever he does to prosper. He shall find a friend, a father, and brethren in a strange land, where he shall dwell securely, till his brethren, unknown to themselves, shall bow down unto him with the humblest supplications. For Joseph shall be found. Thine arms shall yet embrace him, Reuben; and the whole world shall know him as the nursing father of the chosen race. Meanwhile, secure thine own life, Reuben, by concealing the matter from hoary Israel, lest the rage of thy brethren mix thee untimely with the dust; for some of them are old in bloodshed, and shudder not at human carnage. Observe my words, and all shall be well."

As Phœbus approached the north-east verge of this dusky world, and fair Aurora purpled the sky, the messengers set out by different ways to overtake the caravan: they roamed through howling wastes and sandy deserts to no purpose; till, spent with the fatigue of the day, they returned faint and weary the ensuing night, to their brethren at Dothan. Every countenance discovered disgust and sorrow; even Simeon could have wished for Joseph's return. Reuben alone maintained a placid countenance, to the surprise of all his brethren, who saw his rage and despair so suddenly turned into calm serenity. He

said, "Come, my brethren, let us leave off caring for Joseph. The pious youth is the care of his God, who will never forsake the needy in their affliction. Let us concert some measures to support our good old father under the heavy weight of affliction, just falling upon his venerable head. O Jacob! revered old man, my heart bleeds for thee. A tide of sorrow will soon overwhelm thee. But thou hast the promise, and my God is thine. May he indeed be near to thee."

"Matters being as they are," said Asher, "I hold it good that we kill a kid or a lamb, take Joseph's many-coloured coat, rend it in divers places, and smear it with the blood of the slain beast, and send it to our father, who will naturally conclude, that some hungry lion has devoured him, and we, his sons, shall be freed from all suspicion. We are necessitated either to confess the fact, or cover it over with dissimulation. If we do the former, we draw down the curse of our father upon us, and there is at least a strong probability, that by the latter we shall retain his love and confidence; though God knows we little deserve it."

The advice given by Asher was immediately approved, and Simeon and Levi were appointed the messengers to carry the coat unto Jacob, all the rest being unable to bear the sorrow of their parent upon this mournful occasion. How nearly allied is one sin to another! The sons of Jacob have now no covering for their infamy, but lying and dissimulation. "Welcome, my sons, welcome Simeon and Levi," says the tender patriarch; "how do all your brethren, my children, and how does Joseph?"—"Our brethren, sir, are all well; but, as for Joseph, we have seen nothing of him."—"Seen nothing of him!" replied he: "these five days are gone since I sent him forth to visit his brethren, and inquire after your health. I pray God that my fears may be groundless. O that no harm may have befallen my boy!"—"We would hope for the best, sir, and yet we

are not without fear about him ourselves," said they, "seeing he is not at home. As we came along through the wilderness, we found a coat that somewhat resembles our brother's; but you will better judge of it when you see it. This, sir, is the coat we found; see now whether it be thy son's coat or not."—"Ah! it is my son's coat indeed: without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces," he said, and the blood receding from his countenance, he sunk down into the chair, and could not for a long time be recovered from his fit. The household was alarmed. Benjamin and all his daughters flew to his assistance, and the general cry was; O our father! Our father! Our good father is dying! Dinah flew about the tent, tearing her hair in the utmost distraction, crying, "O my father, my father, would to God I had died in thy stead! What shall thy daughter, thy friendless Dinah do now? A dishonour to her race; now turned out into an inhospitable world, without the protection of a father. Wretched Dinah! Better hadst thou never been born! Cursed be the son of Hamor. Cursed be he that glories in the destruction of a virgin." One of the female train chafed his withered limbs, another rubbed his temples with odours, till at last life began to return. Fetching a deep sigh, his eyes widely rolling, he asked "Where am I? What has been the matter, my daughters? Why have ye disturbed me? I am now waked out of the soundest sleep that ever I fell into. My Dinah, where is she? Tell me, my girl, what ails thee; I am thy father, Dinah; come near my love, and let me embrace thee. Bid Joseph to come speedily, I want to see him. Ay, now I have hit the sore. Joseph is gone, Dinah! Joseph is rent to pieces. Bring that bloody coat: that coat, Benjamin, is thy brother Joseph's; he wears it no more. Some of that voracious army, wherewithal God hath plagued sinful man, hath torn him in pieces and devoured him. O my Joseph!

my Joseph. Had I a thousand lives, I would have given them all to have redeemed thee from death. But thou art gone, my son, for ever gone from the land of light, and I shall soon follow thee into that of darkness. I come, my son; I follow thee; I soon shall join thee in the land afar off. Hasten thy pace, thou tardy executioner; cut short thy work, thou friendly enemy: I long once more to encircle my son in these withered arms. Yet, my Dinah, poor, ruined damsel, if I could, I would live for thy sake, a little to alleviate thy sorrows. But I die, my girl: I find I cannot long survive my Joseph." Lovely Benjamin, Dinah, and their sisters, endeavoured to console the mourning patriarch under this heavy loss. But all in vain. He refused to be comforted, saying, "Nay but I will die with my son." Shunah the wife of Judah, Tamah the wife of Simeon, and Zillah the wife of Naphtali, endeavoured to set before him his numerous seed. His eleven remaining sons, their present offspring, and the prospect of a numerous issue. But the good man replied, "These are not my Joseph!" and sunk into another fit of agonizing sorrow. Thus he grieved from day to day for the loss of his son, nor could all the endeavours of his children comfort him.

Joseph and his company drew near to Memphis, the capital of Egypt, where the Merchants intended to dispose of their goods. And here Alvah, the Ishmaelite, found a market for his young Hebrew likewise. Alvah had seen so much of Joseph's dexterity in the management of his affairs, and was so delighted with his piety and good sense, that he would gladly have kept him for his own servant, had it been his pleasure to have continued with him; but knowing his distressed circumstances, deemed it ungenerous to lay any constraint upon his inclination.

Therefore, the evening after their arrival in Memphis, he called Joseph to him, and thus addressed him:

“ My young man, I am perfectly sensible that for envy you was separated from your father’s house and sold unto me. Since you came under my direction your agreeable converse, your courteous and affable conduct, has perfectly gained my affections. If you are content to abide with me, I will use you as a friend rather than a servant ; for you are dear to me, Joseph, as if you was my own son. Nevertheless, as you may have your objections to returning to the land where your barbarous brethren reside, and as I am uninformed concerning the purposes of your God towards you, I leave you to your own voluntary choice, either to return with me, or to abide in Egypt. But if you fix upon Egypt as your residence, you must be sold, my Joseph—Sold as a slave, my friend, notwithstanding I believe you are born to rule.” The son of Jacob respectfully replied : “ My dear sir, my honoured Alvah, my father, permit me to call you by that endearing name ; I cannot enough admire the goodness of God, who provides for me in strangers that friendship which was denied me in the house of my brethren. All was cruelty from them ; but friendship, my dear master, has run through the whole of your conduct towards me. Inclination, sir, would induce me to follow your fortune, good or bad, but a secret message delivered to me by an heavenly messenger not two hours before I was sold unto you, obliges me, as your will coincides therewith, to abide a bondman in Egypt. I would not as yet willingly divulge the contents of the message referred to ; but the time will come, my honoured master, that I shall more fully reveal the cause of my banishment. Then you will clearly see, that want of respect to you is no part of the reason why I desire to leave your very agreeable service. Permit me, sir, to beg your endeavour to dispose of me as you would wish to have your own son disposed of in similar circumstances, and let me

owe my good fortune, if such should befall me in a strange land, to a man to whom I am already under so many great obligations. Thus, sir, will you bind me to you for ever, and make me more yours than I possibly could be as one of your domestic servants."

"I will, Joseph," replied the good Ishmaelite; "I will take care to dispose of you to your best advantage. I will be to you in place of a father at this time. But when you are advanced, my son, as God, even the God of your father Abraham will advance you to the highest honours, forget not your father. Think of poor Alvah, and for my sake deal favourably with my seed, should they ever make supplication unto you. I will enhance your price, my friend, in some low proportion to your worth, but not a penny of it shall abide with me, for I have profited greatly by your presence already."—

"My dear sir," replied Joseph, "you are a merchant, and must live upon your gain; why should you throw away any part of it upon a poor unworthy stranger!"

—"I tell you, Joseph," returned he, with some emotion, "you are a friend of the Almighty's, and your God will never let poor Alvah be a loser by any little kindness he may shew to you. Be satisfied, Joseph.—Be content, I say; and prepare yourself by to-morrow noon for the market; and here, let me see, take these few pieces to provide yourself with decent apparel, and I, in the meanwhile, will be taking what measures I can for your good." So saying, he turned and gave no time to reply. Joseph, overwhelmed with gratitude, burst forth into tears, admiring the wisdom and goodness of God in raising up unto him, as it were, a second Jacob in the person of Alvah. "O thou Holy One," he cried, "I am now convinced of thine omnipresence and superintendency over human affairs. I admire thy wisdom, I adore thy goodness to me, who am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies; go on, my God, to perfect what thou hast begun, and succeed

the earnest endeavours of benevolent Alvah in my behalf, and succeed thou me, and be thou with me, my father and my friend, in this land wherein I am a stranger, and the glory of all will ultimately rebound unto thee. Amen."

The time arrived that Joseph must appear for sale. He came arrayed in plain but decent apparel, which shewed the graces of his person to the best advantage. His master and he had but just come to the mart, when Potiphar, a renowned officer in the army, and captain general of the forces of Egypt, happened to come past, and fixed his eye upon him, conceived a singular liking for him. What pity is it, said he within himself, to see a person of such an attractive deportment, displaying a countenance so distinguishingly lovely, exposed to sale to every sordid wretch of a master? If money will redeem him from slavery it shall be done; and I shall deem myself happy in having released one of the most amiable of human kind. "What is the price of this young man, my master?"

"If he is sold, sir," replied Alvah, "an hundred and fifty pieces is his price; but I sell him not unless I know to whom, and what treatment he is likely to meet with: for it is not necessity, but choice that detains him in Egypt."—"My name," said he, "is Potiphar: I am of some consideration in the state, and near the person of his majesty."—"Then, sir, the young man is yours at your own price, and I hope you will consider him as one that might have expected better fortune but for the malice and envy of jealous brethren. I am proud, sir, to recommend him to you as the most virtuous, faithful, and pious of his race." It is agreed. "Are you willing to follow the fortune of Potiphar?"—"I am willing to be his humble servant, if, sir, you are."—"Here, then, merchant, here is your money."—"One word sir, ere the bargain is

closed; and that is, that as I trade to this place, I must beg leave to have a friendly interview occasionally with my friend Joseph; for he is my friend, although I have the power of disposing of him at present.”—“Far be it from Potiphar to hinder the youth he loves from access to his friends. You are welcome at all times to visit your youthful, your amiable friend.”

Joseph was placed in Potiphar's family, after Alvah had, according to promise, obliged him to accept of the hundred and fifty pieces for which he was sold, and taken a tender farewell of him for a season. He had not been long in his new station before he gave such proofs of his probity, as gained him the esteem of all the family.

Potiphar was but lately married to a beautiful lady of the first rank, whose name was Sabrina, given to the captain by his majesty himself. The better to solemnize the nuptials of his warlike officer, the king appointed a hunting match in the desert of Arabia, where he was graciously pleased himself to attend Potiphar and Sabrina. They had not long ranged the lonely wild, ere they roused a monstrous lion, master of a savage family, at whose appearance even the hardiest of them gave back. The surly monster, with furious disdain flashing from his eyes, stalked slowly in sullen majesty, and with eyes askance surveyed his competitors, till perceiving himself overmatched by the number of baying-hounds just letting loose upon him, he took to his heels and sought refuge in the distant thicket. Sabrina, mounted on a swift Arabian horse, well accustomed to exercises of this kind, surpassed the hounds, and even outflung the wind; exposed herself to the greatest danger, to the terror of the noble company, none of whom could come near her, Joseph alone excepted. Mounted on the fleetest of his master's coursers, he kept close to his lady, and

well for her it was so ; for coming to the edge of the thicket, which, by reason of its closeness would not admit the entrance of the lion, who finding himself so closely pursued, turned fiercely upon his enemies. Sabrina being next unto him, had no doubt fallen a prey to his fury, had not Joseph rushed between her and danger. The savage roared like the loudest thunder, and flew in the greatest ferocity at the lady, who almost swooned at the fright ; whilst Joseph sprung from his horse, gored the monster in the neck, and pinned him fast with his spear to the earth. By this time Potiphar himself arrived, and, struck with astonishment, partly at the danger in which his Sabrina had been, and partly at the heroic fortitude of his new and beloved servant, he could not speak a word, till falling first on the bosom of his spouse, and then upon Joseph's neck, he poured forth a flood of joy and gratitude. He instantly enfranchised the deliverer of his love, and placed him at the head of his family, where he acted in all respects as one who serveth not man so much as God. Such circumspection and fidelity rarely attend the stewards of gentlemen of elevated rank. Joseph was exceeding lovely in his person, and the late instance of his gallantry and fortitude, made a criminal impression on the mind of his lady, whilst he, unsuspecting thereof, from a principle of duty and benevolence, performed both to her and to his lord, all the good offices within his power, which, although a duty incumbent on him, contributed to foster the latent flame unlawfully kindled in her warped heart.

The Almighty Jehovah, whose all-seeing eye, with one comprehensive glance examineth all our thoughts, whether virtuous or corrupt, seeing the workings of Sabrina's heart, and having destined the blooming youth to escape the snare so fatal to his hopes, as well as ruinous to the peace of his undisturbed mind,

commanded Gabriel to descend to earth, and give the stripling some intimation of the danger he was in, yet still to conceal the quarter from whence it was to come. Obedient to the high behest of the Eternal, the seraph, prest with glowing ardour, bends on his golden pinions, shoots through the vault of ether, and stops not till arrived at the palace of Potiphar, when gloomy night, in her ebon car, had measured half her lonesome journey. He breathed an odoriferous gale upon the bed, and instantly the Hebrew exile felt the warm glow of exalted virtue ascending towards the empyreum. Sweet was the slumber when the pious soul breathed after joys of an immortal nature. Soon he fancied himself, studious of his master's affairs, assiduously promoting the interest of his generous patron. Thus employed, he saw a hand drawing a net composed of golden wire around the place where he stood, and instantly found himself entangled therein. The snare appeared so formidable, that he saw no way of escape left for him, nor could he tell to what purpose he was thus involved. Considering himself as a prisoner in this golden snare, he heard a voice as it had been from the ærial regions—"O Joseph! most favoured of the children of Jacob, remember thou the God of the Hebrews. Take hold of the strength of Omnipotence, and one vigorous effort delivers thee from the snare." This said, the young patriarch lifted up his heart to his God, in this short ejaculation: "O God of my fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for the sake of him who shall bruise the serpent's head, and destroy the snare of the devil, assist me this once and deliver." Then collecting all his force, he exerted himself in one vigorous struggle, and found the wires break as easily, as Sampson afterwards did the new cords with which he was bound. Just as he sprung into liberty, he awoke, and rejoiced that it was but a dream.

Joseph's God was with him in whatever he did.

He gave him singular wisdom and prudence in the management of his affairs, insomuch that whatever he did prospered in his hands ; which led his lord to rely upon his wisdom and integrity with a perfect confidence ; and unreservedly committed unto his care the sole management of all his estate. Unenvied, he enjoyed this flow of calm prosperity without any mixture of bitterness, besides that which arose from his banishment from Jacob and Benjamin. Happy had it been for Sabrina, if her heart had been as free from unlawful desire as was that of her amiable Hebrew. But, alas ! she fondly encouraged the pleasing wish, till it arose to a passion too strong for her to subdue. Shame induced her long to conceal the guilty flame ; yet, in spite of art and studious care, an inward langour discovered itself in the pensiveness of her countenance. Her unsuspecting lord called every possible means to her assistance. The sons of Esculapius exhausted their skill ; the whole *Materia Medica* was ransacked for a cure ; every diversion, which pleasantry could devise, in vain was instituted, to divert the gloom of her solitary mind. She was never happy in any diversions, unless Joseph made one of the party. Her only season of pleasure were, when she could prevail with him to sit with her, and entertain her with the history of his native country ; which he, unskilled in the mysteries of love, very readily consented to.

About this time an accident happened, which served greatly to increase the fatal passion. Potiphar and Sabrina went on a visit to Ira, a Lybian prince, where they plenteously enjoyed the rites of hospitality for two or three weeks ; but, unhappily, were attacked by a band of Arabs as they repassed the howling wilderness. At the first discovery of them, Sabrina sunk, as a person dying, in the arms of her husband ; and her soul stood, as it were, on tiptoe, on her pale trembling

lip. As the panther rusheth from the thicket, to seize the passing prey, Joseph bounded from the chariot, vaulted on a led horse, and encouraged the menials to stand by their noble patrons. The Arabs charged them with resolution and vigour; animated by the intrepidity of our hero, the Egyptians returned the charge, and sent amongst them a score of winged deaths, every arrow marked by fate. Then Joseph, clapping spurs to his horse, rode up to the enemy, and with his sabre, divided the head of Mezero, their captain, from his body, and dealt death to many of the Arabs: the servants of Potiphar, following the example of their leader, more than half the banditti were presently dispatched, whilst the rest sought to hide themselves from death by flight. Joseph pursued, and killed many more, as they strove to fly from his avenging arm. Sabrina, being somewhat recovered, Potiphar himself flew to the assistance of his guard, fierce as the lion ravaging for prey; but the work was done, and the enemy discomfited, ere he could arrive. Sabrina, from the chariot, beheld the heroic fortitude of the gallant Hebrew, as he raged along the ranks of the enemy; and every wound he inflicted upon them was as oil poured into the latent flame.

The grateful soul of the young patriarch rejoiced at having it in his power to manifest the sense which he had of their goodness, by exerting himself in their defence, in a season of difficulty and danger. With modesty he received Potiphar's caresses, who presented him to his lady, as her friend and deliverer. His address to his mistress was full of duty, gratitude, and affection; all which encouraged her to hope that he was smote with the same guilty passion with herself, and made her half resolve, at a time convenient, to come to an avowal. Again she resolved to wait yet farther, to see whether his confession would save her from confusion.

BOOK III.

Syrena comforts her mistress by promising success to her amour.—She strives to entice him in vain.—She persuades her lady to an avowal.—His mistress confesseth her love.—Solicits his embrace.—To divert her attention from it, he relates the story of Eve eating the forbidden fruit.—Applies it to his mistress, with a view to reanimate her virtue.—He relates his sister's ravishment, and its fatal consequences.—Her silence and discontent at his coldness.—Consults her nurse, who encourageth her to persist.—She commandeth Joseph to her chamber.—Strives to win him by persuasion.—Then to force him.—He flies from her, and leaves his scarf behind.—Her love turns to rage and hatred.—She accuseth him of an attempt upon her honour.—He is imprisoned.

SYRENA, a person well skilled in all the wily mazes of woman kind, was governess to Sabrina in her virgin years, and now attended her in the capacity of waiting-woman. She alone was intrusted with the fatal secret; her mistress having had full proof of her readiness to concur in any measures to gratify her inclination. She consoled her mistress, and flattered her passion, by assuring her, that as far as she could dive into the secrets of a youthful heart, Joseph was glowing with a passion at least equal with her own. She could read it well in his looks and his sighs. For, amidst all his prosperity, Joseph could not help sighing after his guilty brethren, and his distressed honourable father, from whose embraces he **was** banished without cause. She promised to use all her wisdom to serve her mistress, and did not doubt by her prudent management to bring the blooming Hebrew to her fond embraces. As he was one day in his office settling his master's accounts, Syrena entered, and having shut the door, she thus accosted him: "Master Joseph, be idle who will, we are always sure to find you in your

business. Indeed master Joseph, our lord is happy in having such a servant as yourself. I do not wonder that both he and my lady have such an high esteem for you.”—“ I tell you, Mrs. Syrena,” replied Joseph, “ I do nothing but what is my duty. My honourable master and lady have a right to my best services, and I should be shamefully wanting in my duty to God, to them, and myself, if I did not study to my utmost to promote their honour, advantage, and delight.”—“ I am glad, sir,” replied Syrena, “ that your virtuous sentiments concur so exactly with my own. And I can tell you, Mr. Joseph, that more tenderness is due from you to your amiable mistress, than perhaps you are aware of.”—“ I know,” said he, “ that my lady is amiable and virtuous, and merits my humblest regard; which I shall ever be ready to render her with the utmost pleasure.”—“ She is virtuous,” said Syrena, “ and yet I can tell you, Joseph, she cannot help being sensible of your attractions, and entertaining the fondness of affection for you. I wrung the painful secret with the greatest difficulty from her lips; and you, my friend, may avail yourself of your happiness, and embrace a favour which she would deny to any but yourself, was he even the first prince of the blood.” Rejoined the patriarch, “ My master and mistress are daily loading me with favours which I am altogether unworthy of; I believe their readiness to add more as occasion may offer; but the lip that would insinuate so much as a hint contrary to my mistress’s honour, ought to be sealed in everlasting silence.”—“ Not so fast, sir,” returned she; “ I tell you she loves you, and longs for your embrace. But I enjoin you to conceal the fatal truth, and improve it to your own advantage.” She ended here, and returned to her lady, who waited impatiently the issue of this conversation.

Syrena failed not to enlarge upon her own sagacity and address; she related the converse she had had

with Joseph, in the manner which would best flatter her lady's passion; and from the whole she inferred, that it was caution in the Hebrew which caused him to feign ignorance. But she was sure that, amidst all his care to conceal it, she could discern flashes of passion dart from his amorous eye, when the name of Sabrina was mentioned. "In short, madam," continued she, "the matter must be between you and him; for I perceive he is so cautious, that he will admit none into the secret besides yourselves. And indeed I cannot blame him, when I consider how false and deceitful the greater part of people are. You know, madam, he is young, and a stranger to intercourse with our sex; and who knows how far modesty may keep him back from an avowal; besides, he may fear your ladyship's resentment, in case your passion should not be answerable to his."

"O Syrena!" replied the wife of Potiphar, "thou knowest that in our sex an avowal is hard, even when the object is lawful; but how much more so must it be when the object is criminal, and an avowal is the display of our guilt and shame. Yet I would even venture to confess my love to him, could I but hope the haughty youth would embrace my proposal: but, O Syrena! should he refuse it, then should I be undone! His person is amiable and lovely, his conduct affable and polite, his spirit open and benevolent: but his virtue, Syrena! I fear his virtue is inflexible."—"O, madam," replied the swarthy duenna, "no virtue can be proof against such charms as yours. The Hebrew will fall an easy victim, when he is assured of your affection."

Encouraged by the assurances of Syrena, she resolves to abandon shame and modesty at once, and solicit Joseph to her embrace. To this purpose she proposeth an airing, and requires him to attend her, in Potiphar's absence, in her chariot. As they were

on the way, with a scarlet blush upon her countenance, and desire sparkling in her eyes, with a faltering voice that bespoke the blackness of her guilt, she said, "Joseph, you cannot be ignorant of my desire for your company; and yet I can tell you, that if your bosom is proof against love, love even to me, I may rue the day that ever I beheld your too amiable face. For I love you, Joseph; my pain forces me to confess my shame; I have trusted my honour in your hand; I hope you will act with your usual gallantry." She said—then leaning her head on his snowy bosom melted into a flood of tears, which she endeavoured, but in vain, to conceal. Astonished at this open declaration, it was some time before he was capable of speech or reflection.

After a long silence, accompanied with tears upon her part, and heart-felt sighs upon his, not without struggles between corruption and virtue, in broken accents he replied, "Your honour, my lady, is ever safe with your unworthy servant, whose greatest glory is to be faithful to the trust reposed in him. But, before I explain myself upon this matter, will your ladyship give me leave to relate an affair which is better known among the children of Shem than among the descendants of Ham." After leave obtained, with hope of extricating himself from his present difficulty, and working some suitable impression upon the mind of his mistress, he thus began :

"When our first parents, Adam and Eve, originally dropped from the all-forming hand, they were perfectly free from any bias to evil; not one corrupt inclination possessed their peaceful breasts. This calm serenity, this sweet composure, continued with them as long as they retained their innocence. But, to their sad experience, they ere long found that the effect of guilt is dire alarm and incessant preturbation. Our benevolent Creator was pleased to put the parent

of mankind in possession of the paradisaical garden, where a perpetual spring cheered the blessed mound, and every salubrious vegetable. 'All that thine eyes behold, all that the earth produceth, Adam, is thine,' saith the munificent Deity. 'I give thee leave to use thy utmost freedom with all the produce of the earth. One tree, and only one, I forbid thee to touch. Its fertile boughs, indeed, bend low beneath its fruit, which pendant hangs attractive to the eye. This, Adam, is the forbidden tree. These are the fruit, to taste of which is death.' Beware of it, man; come not near it, Adam; for on the day thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die. Incautious Eve, the mother of humanity, in an evil hour was prevailed upon by the arch apostate, to eat the prohibited morsel, and awful was the consequence. Having eat thereof herself, she became her husband's first seducer, and drew him, contrary to the light of his own conscience, to partake of her guilt. This done, the horrors of Gehenna tortured their guilty consciences, and they knew not where to fly to shun the threatened death. The evening arrived, the sky had lost its serenity, the beasts their wonted tameness; the flowers lost the greatest part of their fragrance, and all nature seemed to wear a melancholy aspect. On the evening, just as radiant Phœbus concealed himself in the western ocean, the Divine Creator himself comes down into the garden, to call the delinquents to account for their conduct. Awful was the change. They cannot now stand with filial respect and confidence in the sacred presence; much less did they long for the approach of the celestial visitant as heretofore; but basely fly from the face of their Maker, to hide themselves from his researches, whose amiable presence erewhile, they counted the most exalted blessing. Nor did the Eternal himself appear at this time with that friendly and familiar air as before, but with resentment glowing

on his awful countenance. The thicket unable to conceal the parents of mankind from the piercing eye of Omniscience, he arraigns them at his equitable bar, hears their poor defence, and denounceth upon them the fatal sentence. Since then, none may hope to touch forbidden fruit with impunity. You, my lady, are like the interdicted tree. Your amiable personal excellencies display themselves in the most alluring manner; but they are forbid the enjoyment of all men, my lord excepted. He alone may approach you with familiarity. He alone may lawfully enjoy. Was I, madam, to dare injuriously to betray my master, and to dishonour his amiable consort, I should act as a villain and ungrateful traitor to the best of masters, and as a rebel against the God of my ancestors, whose tremendous wrath I should thereby awake; and you yourself, madam, upon cool reflection, would curse me for perpetrating the execrable deed. I love you, mistress, and would protect, not dishonour you. I love my honourable lord, and would not betray him. I love my God, and would not offend him. Permit me then, madam, to entreat you to stifle a passion so destructive to your honour and tranquillity; which, if indulged, will yield the most bitter reflections, and expose to the greatest dangers."

"Ah, Joseph," replied the wife of Potiphar, "what a well-invented story your icy heart has contrived in order to evade the honours proffered you! What needless scruples does that whim of religion and virtue inspire you with! What injury would thereby be done to your master, Joseph? I am still his; always ready to oblige him, and should never behave to him with the greater distance. We have nothing to fear, so long as we are prudent enough to conceal our intercourses from the curious eye. I tell you again, I love you, Joseph."

"Madam," returned the Hebrew, "even in my

father's family, in the case of my only sister, I have a loud monitor, that bids me beware of the sin of uncleanness."—"I pray now let us have it," said she: "I suppose it is some whimsical, religious story, tending to the same purpose."

"It is a truth, madam, the remembrance of which will give occasional sorrow to me to my dying day. My sister, young, amiable, and curious, longing to see more of the world than her father's house admitted of, went forth into a neighbouring principality, at a time, when a magnificent festival, in honour of their patron deity, was solemnized. Amongst the multitude who attended, were Shechem, the young prince of the Hivites, and Tamar his sister. Dinah, young and vain, was attended with a gaudy train selected out of my father's menials, and she herself in elegant apparel. Prince Shechem cast a languishing look upon my sister, conceived a violent passion for her, and resolved at all events to possess her. His sister Tamar was young and beautiful, but unadorned with that amiable virtue which is the greatest glory to her sex. She contracted an intimacy with my sister Dinah, who, unskilled in amorous intrigues, accepted of an invitation to visit the princess Tamar, in the city of Shechem. The day was spent in innocent pleasantries, only every now and then there was something that bordered upon the profane. As the solar orb descended the western hemisphere, Dinah proposed her return to her father, but was put off from time to time, by the prince and princess, till she was at last convinced of her unhappiness, and too late repented the curiosity that led her forth to see the daughters of the land. She was not to be won with prayers and intreaties, therefore was forced to a compliance with his lewd desires, and for a time continued a prisoner to the prince's affection, within his palace. Still he loved her with increasing fervour, and his very soul clave to the unhappy damsel. So

courteous, affable, and loving was his conduct to her, after he had defiled her, that she half forgave the injury, and conceived something like affection for him. His love grew stronger every day; and finding that he could not live without her company on the one hand, nor his affection permit him to use her like an harlot on the other, he implored the good offices of king Hamor his father, to procure her for him in lawful marriage. From motives of policy, the old king readily complied, proposed to his courtiers the desires of his son, and then made suit unto Israel for his consent. My father called a council descended from his loins, to deliberate on the proposal of Hamor; and the issue was, that unless the subjects of that prince would conform to the laws of the Hebrews, they would not consent, but would rescue their sister by force of arms, or perish in the attempt. This communicated to Hamor and Shechem, they made no difficulty of complying with the condition. A public festival was appointed, to be observed by all ranks of the people, to solemnize the marriage of Shechem and Dinah: on the first day of which every male was circumcised, in compliance with the Hebrews, and the carnival greatly inflamed the blood, and enervating their minds, they fell an easy prey to the premeditated revenge of my brethren. Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, selected a choice band out of Israel's domestic retinue, and, clad in arms, before the dawn of the third morning of the festival, came intrepidly upon the city, and filled it with fearful carnage. King Hamor and his son, hearing the cry of murder from all quarters, alarmed the household troops, but, ere they could make resistance, met with death in the gates of the palace royal. The city they reduced to ashes, and slew every man within it. This horrid slaughter and conflagration all arose from the unlawfulness of Shechem's love. Had he observed the rules of virtue, and proposed honourable terms to

the Patriarch, he would no doubt have accepted of the alliance. But uncleanness is not to be tolerated in the house of Israel. Now, my honourable lady, consider the difference between my lord Potiphar, first of Pharaoh's martial train, and these simple Hebrew swains. If they could pour out desolation upon the metropolis of a kingdom, in revenge of their sister's dishonour, what might not my lord do, was any villain to dare audaciously to defile his honourable bed, and violate the chastity of his betrothed lady? Far be it from Joseph, madam, to entertain a thought so treacherous to either you or my lord."

She replied not, but disappointed in her love, continued the rest of the time full of silent discontent, her troubled mind agitated with different passions, gave place alternately to love, fear, and hateful revenge; but the more that Joseph saw the agitations of her mind, the more steadily was his own heart fortified by virtue. Arrived at the palace, she retired to her chamber, to consult with her nurse Syrena what further should be done; and afflicted Joseph went to his apartment, to implore the protection of Jacob's God.

Syrena gave it as her opinion, that fear or modesty must needs be the cause of Joseph's refusal of an offer, that did so much honour to a favourite menial; alleging, that her mistress's graces were sufficient to thaw the frigidity of even old age itself: and advised that a further trial should be made ere she gave up her hopes. Pharaoh's birth-day was now at hand, and the general must repair to court, to compliment his majesty, and assist upon the grand occasion; but Sabrina was taken extremely ill in the morning, with a palpitation of heart, and great depression of spirits, and therefore could not attend him to the court. Her lord was no sooner gone with his retinue, than she sends Syrena to command Joseph to attend her plea-

sure in her chamber. Slow of pace, and with a reluctant heart, he came and stood at a formal distance from her, while in thoughtful silence she sat, her eyes intently fixed on his blushing face. "And are you at last come," said she, "ungrateful youth, to scorn and slight your over-fond mistress. Come nearer, sir, and let me speak with freedom to you; for you and I must be better acquainted before we part. It would have been better for you, and more becoming your character and station, to have complied at once, with my former request, if it had only been out of respect to the dignity of my station, and the violent excess of my passion; and not have suffered me to undergo the shame of repeating my solicitations, and condescending to express myself in terms too strong for female modesty to utter without a blush. But I am willing to put the most favourable construction upon your conduct, and will not only make all possible allowances for it, but endeavour to remove out of the way every thing that would protract our pleasure. Perhaps, Joseph, you might entertain some suspicion, whether I was really in earnest at our last interview, or if I did not make that humble prostration of myself to you, on purpose to try your virtue. But assure yourself that I was in earnest, as my repeating of the same request might abundantly serve to demonstrate. But I'll tell you more, Joseph, and what would undo me, was it known by any but ourselves. This day I feigned myself sick, on purpose to be at home with you. The jollity of courtly parade is nothing to me compared to your sweet company. Now you may, if you will, see that I can part with the company of nobles and princes, for the love I bear to your amiable person, my Joseph. And shall I languish and pine without any hope of comfort, when it is in your power, my dear friend, to relieve me? Do not talk any more to me of those holy ties of religion, those severe rules

of virtue. Virtue is a mere imaginary thing, that can bring no pleasure, but only distract the heart with terror. And what is religion, but a dream, as the lives of all our priests testify; for however they cry out against the sins of the times, when in the pulpit, there are none that relish gay delights better than they in private? Could thy God, my Joseph, delight in making thee behave cruelly to one that loves thee, he were to be detested instead of adored? Beware, Joseph, and not father thy indifference to me upon the gods; rather own that some happy, unstained nymph has captivated your affections, and that for her sake you cannot, you dare not, oblige your mistress. But cannot you be her's and mine too? But, oh! your honour is concerned. Pray, where is my honour in thus humbly suing to you, my friend? but what is honour? merely fantastic and precarious. Honour is certainly to ease the pains of those that love us."

"Oh, madam!" returned he, with a sigh sufficient to rend his loins, "what avails a momentary pleasure, that soon must be devoured by keen remorse! Once done, it cannot be recalled, let the repentance be ever so poignant. Concealed by these curtains will not secure us from the fears of discovery and disgrace. I might indeed join with you to dishonour my lord, and for a moment we might riot in the pleasures of sense. But, alas! what would this be in comparison of the solid pleasures of a good conscience? Equal, if not superior delights are lawful to you in your marriage relation to him, to whom you gave yourself. And where can a man be found more amiable, and more desirable for a bosom companion, than my lord? Think, my lady, how far what you propose would debase you below your rank, to come to a level with your poor servant, whom you may at all times command in every thing lawful. No, madam, I assure you, I cannot consent to ■ deed so base, as wilfully

to injure the benevolent Potiphar, dishonour the God of my fathers, and bring an indelible stain on the family of Israel. Far from being like idols of stocks and stones, my God sees our most secret actions ; he hears our softest whispers, and tries the deepest recesses of thought. Urge me not, madam, for I cannot commit this great wickedness in the sight of my God." He ended here, and she full of resentment replied :—

" It might have been sufficient, modestly to have refused the offer, which the excess of my passion urged me to make, without upbraiding me with shame. This argues impudence, joined with an unrelenting heart ; but I leave it for you to choose—whether you will kindly embrace your own happiness, and render happy her that loves you to distraction, or to stand the shock of my revenge ; for revenged I will be : these charms, for which princes have sighed in vain are not to be slighted with impunity. No, sir, never think of it. I shall certainly accuse you to your master of having attempted my dishonour, and a dry ostentation of virtue, and the most solemn protestations of innocence, will not then deliver you from the fangs of punishment."

O Joseph ! never was virtue assaulted like thine—never did youth more gloriously triumph over temptation. Neither prayers, tears, nor threatnings, upon her part, compassion nor terror upon thine, could alter the purposes of thy determined virtue, and make thee yield to the importunity of a dishonest appetite. Amiable youth ! how swelled thy noble heart with generous pity for thy betrayed master, and with grief for thy fallen mistress ! Even the danger that on all hands surrounded thee, could not stem the chrystal tide that flowed down thy manly cheeks ; whilst Sabrina sat with her eyes fixed upon thee—eyes sparkling both with love and revenge.

Mistaken woman ! she interprets Joseph's tears in

her own favour, and bent on completing her own shame, she lays hold on him, and threw herself on the bed, saying, "Come, Joseph, let us enjoy the present moment, whilst kindness gently flows through your yielding heart."

"No, madam," replied the steady youth, "dungeons and gibbets are no objects of my fear; criminal converse with a forbidden object; injuring my master and offending my God, are what I justly fear; and I am in danger of them all whilst I am in your company; but I abhor the deed, and I fly from the place of temptation." So saying, he turned hastily about, freed himself from her embrace, and rushed from the room. Her lust grown to a fury, unbridled, she strove to pull him upon the bed, when disentangling the diamond which buttoned his purple scarf, he left it in her possession, and so escaped the snare.

The noble youth departed obstinate in virtue; she was miserably distracted between the sting of her disappointed love and the fear of her being discovered: but she soon resolved the ruin of him, who had goodness enough not to ruin her, even at her own request. She cried aloud, as if in imminent danger, and her nurse Syrena, who guessed at the cause, flew to her assistance. She found her sitting upon a bed, Joseph's scarf lying by her, and deeply bathed in tears. "O what shall I do, Syrena," cried she, "the scornful Hebrew despiseth my passion, and fled but just now from me, with as much horror as if I had been a cockatrice. Go, nurse, alarm the house, and have him seized; for I will swear an attempt of ravishment against him. Befriend me now but this once, my dear Syrena, and I am your friend for ever." The household alarmed, Joseph is seized and kept in confinement till Potiphar's return, which was in the evening. He went directly to his spouse's chamber to inquire after her health, where he found her in the utmost

disorder and confusion, with the rage of her disappointed lust. Struck with astonishment, he kindly inquired the cause of her disorder.

“Alas! my lord,” said this daughter of deceit, “we have nourished up a viper to sting us; a wretch that will undo us, if permitted under the roof. The insolent Hebrew, forgetting his wretchedness when you was pleased to take him under your protection, and the friendly entertainment we have given him since he lived with us; not content with being the sole disposer of all your possessions, aspireth to your bed. I was laid down to take a little slumber at noon, when the fellow came audaciously into my chamber, and explained his beastly design. I chid his impudent lewdness, and charged him to be gone that instant, or I would inform you of his conduct; but, instead of departing, the villain laid hold on me, and by force would have obtained his filthy purpose, had I not alarmed the house with my cries. When he found me inflexible, and heard the cries of my distress, he hasted away in such disorder, that he left his scarf behind him; a sure testimony of his villainy. My lord, you have professed to love me: if you do, you will revenge the insult offered to my honour, by inflicting the most exemplary punishment upon this insolent wretch. I shall never be able to endure the sight of him again about the house.”

Highly delighted with the virtue and probity of his lady, and astonished at the effrontery of the Hebrew, he commanded Joseph to be brought pinioned into his presence, and with a countenance stern as the face of war, thus accosted him. ‘Wretch! what pity is it that thy outside, and undaunted air, should belie such a base and diabolical heart. I blame myself, wretch, that I ever sheltered thee under my roof, and placed such a villain at the head of my affairs. But thy vile hypocrisis would deceive those that are even

but a few degrees better than thyself; well then might thy saintly shew gain upon my artless heart, a stranger to treachery and black design. Wouldst thou, viper, bite the hand that feeds thee, and poison the bosom that nourished thee? Was it not enough that I had put my all into thy untrusty hands, but thou must aspire even to my bed? A gloomy dungeon shall supersede the purple bed to which thou aspiredst, and rattling chains shall serve instead of the soft caresses of unlawful love. Away with the slave to his destined dwelling, till I have time to meditate some unheard-of punishment for his baseness!" The same virtue that preserved the pious Hebrew, in the time of temptation, from the guilty deed, preserved him now from fearing the threats of his master; wherefore, with a steady and undaunted air, he replied,

"Dungeons and chains, my lord, I can defy, nor can even the approach of death at all disturb the peace of my heart; but your displeasure, my lord, I cannot sustain. The hatred of my kind and generous master, once my avowed friend, is worse than a thousand deaths. But, remember it, Potiphar, Joseph is clear from the guilt charged against him; and his own conscience cannot accuse him of so much as a dishonest thought of this kind. I believe in God. The God of my father, in due time, will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness in clearing up my innocence, and exposing to infamy the baseness of my accusers, of what rank soever they be."—He said, and instantly was conducted to jail, with a strict charge to the keeper, to lade him with the heaviest irons, and to shut him up in the closest ward.

BOOK IV.

GABRIEL ascends to heaven to receive fresh instructions.—**Rachel** and **Thirza** descend and comfort **Joseph** unperceived.—Their discourse.—The jailor has a dream.—Sees a heavenly apparition go to **Joseph's** apartment.—**Gabriel** appears to **Joseph**, instructs and comforts him.—The jailor's reverence for **Joseph**.—**Potiphar**, called to battle, forgets **Joseph**.—He gets acquainted with the king's butler and baker.—Their dreams.—The butler's history.—The good interpretation of his dream.—The fatal interpretation of the baker's.—His former villainy and murder.—An apparition of his murdered brother.—The butler's restoration to his office.—**Joseph** falls in love with an unknown princess.—The baker's execution.—**Sabrina's** passion for **Joseph** rekindles.

GABRIEL, appointed guardian to the banished **Joseph**, industriously strove to fortify his youthful mind against the attacks of wickedness. Seeing now the issue, he ascended swifter by far than the forked lightnings, to the regions of eternal day, to receive instructions from the universal Governor, what to do in favour of his beloved charge. Meanwhile, **Rachel**, **Joseph's** mother, and **Thirza**, the wife of **Shem**, riding on a golden cloud, were taking a tour through this part of the universe; and seeing the lovely youth conducted to prison, they descended low, and breathed ambrosial fragrance into the dungeon, a little to mitigate his sorrow. "O **Thirza**," said **Jacob's** departed spouse, "how deep and intricate are the ways of the Almighty to us, whilst in a state of dark mortality? Who could, from his present circumstances, think that in the divine purpose my **Joseph** should be placed at the head of his brethren from whom he is separated? Who could suppose that the lovely prisoner is to be the future protector of the chosen seed? The archers have indeed galled thee sore, my son, but thy bow has still abode in its strength; by the mighty God of thy father **Jacob**

shall the arms of thy hands be made strong, and these thine enemies shall yet bow down unto thee. O Jacob, thou dear, thou honourable man. What pangs would wring thy sorrowful heart, didst thou but know the agonies of thy beloved! But thou art soothed under the kind deception, believing his pain long since to have been finished. His supposed death gave thee less sorrow by far, than this present life would bring upon thee. Faith and patience, possess ye the heart of my darling, till he ascend triumphant over his enemies.”—“O my Rachel! my dearest daughter,” returned the wife of Shem, “we have even seen, that whom the holy and all-wise God designs for eminent usefulness, he trains them up in the rough school of adversity. The afflictions my lovely descendant endures will endue him with sympathy for the distressed: even when ascended to the government of the kingdom, thy chains, Joseph, will make thy grandeur to sit more graceful upon thee. The false accusations laid against thee, will teach thee the necessity of caution and impartiality in the administration of justice. Persevere in virtue, my son; take kindly the rough means by which thy heavenly Father instructest. The end shall crown the work, and fill thy heart with gratitude, and thy mouth with praise.” Thus the two mothers conversed together, after the manner of disembodied spirits, and gently moved forward upon their cloudy chariot, leaving the perfumes of life behind them.

Chorion, the jailor, had just secured his new prisoner in irons, made fast the prison, and retired to rest, when he fell into a deep sleep, from which he was awakened by the following dream:—He supposed himself in a widely extended field, ruminating on the beauties which every where decorated the teeming earth. Waking slowly along, a yearling lamb, closely pursued by a couple of wolves, ran up to him and fell

down at his feet, as if supplicating protection. Unintimidated, the she wolf came rushing forward, and with bloody fangs, was for devouring the innocent even before his face, whilst he drew his sabre to defend the fugitive. In the midst of the scuffle betwixt him and the ravenous monster, he awoke with an impression upon his mind, that some prisoner under his care was personated by the lamb, persecuted by enemies, who eagerly thirsted for his blood, and hoped to find that safety and friendship in the cells of a prison, which were denied him where he had a right to expect it. Chorion was none of the savage herd, who have in later times kept watch at the doors of prison-houses. He had a humane heart, capable of feeling the distresses of his fellow-creatures. The necessary strictness and severity of his office was always performed with a reluctant hand, and with inward sensations becoming a descendant of Adam.

The dream was suggested at Gabriel's request, by one of the benevolent ethereal spirits, with a view to render Chorion as gentle as might be to Joseph, during the absence of his guardian angel, who upon his account, was ascended to the empyreum. It had its desired effect; for the cautious jailor, for fear that he should add to the sufferings of the innocent, was extremely gentle and tender to all his prisoners.

The following night having spread the thickest darkness over all the land, neither moon nor star embellished the concave sky. As Chorion stood upon his tower, he saw at a distance, darting through the air, a form divinely beautiful and fair, surrounded with glory, almost too strong for his visual orbs to sustain, and followed by a train of stupendous splendour, which evidently bespoke the visitant to be of celestial lineage. As he drew near, and went past the keeper to the prison, he had as good a view of him as his confusion would suffer him to take. For Joseph's

sake, the friendly angel thought proper to favour Chorion with a glimpse of ethereal brilliance, and but a glimpse, lest he should, by too rich a display of celestial excellence, overturn the reasoning powers of his mind. "Some heavenly deity," cried Chorion, in a rapture; "some god, who defends virtue and innocence, propitious to the cries of distress, condescends to visit the loathsome cells of a miserable prison. See, he is gone directly to the stranger's apartments. The youth is innocent of whatever he is accused of; the holy gods will not condescend to visit the guilty. This is the lamb that fled to me for protection. O lovely youth, as far as poor Chorion's influence can go, ye shall meet with nothing but friendship within these walls. I will ease you of your chains, and provide suitable apartments for your reception."

Meanwhile Gabriel stood confest in Joseph's cell, and even groaned to see the son of Israel encumbered with horrid chains. Secretly he gave him a celestial draught just drawn from the fountain of life, which enabled him with pleasure to bear the heavenly radiance with which he was arrayed. "Fear not, Joseph," said the splendid messenger, "I am Gabriel, of whom thou hast often heard. Gabriel, who stands in the presence of the Lord. This is the first time, indeed, of my appearing to thee, but thou hast long been my careful charge. It was I that sent Abel thy kinsman to comfort thee when thou wast in the pit. I stood by with unspeakable pleasure, and beheld the noble resistance you made to the temptations of your mistress; and rejoiced to see you come off a conqueror from danger so fatal. Your present afflictions, my Joseph, are not the fruit of guilt on your part. They are such as you shall be delivered from. But, O! what keen remorse would have torn your heart, had you been left, Joseph, to sin so sadly against your God! From some inkling which the infernal spirits

had got of the designs of your God towards you, they are leagued together to destroy you; and two of the most active of the damned race, as agents for the rebellious community, undertook to accomplish your ruin. Belphegar and Adramelech, they stirred up your brethren against you, and had not I interposed, your blood would have been sacrificed to their malice. Little did they know that the very means which they took to frustrate the designs of grace, were appointed directly to promote them; and that whilst they were gratifying their own infernal malice, they were doing what should be overruled to your advantage. They inflamed your mistress with a burning desire to enjoy your embraces, and turned her love into hatred and rage upon being disappointed. And it was them who inspired Potiphar with the rash design of destroying you. Thus far they have been divinely permitted to persecute you, Joseph. But here ends the bounds of their permission. Trust in the God of thy fathers. Let patience have its perfect work; for when thou art tried, thou shalt come forth as purified gold. Grieve not for your father, for you shall yet see him in a strange land; and these hands of yours shall close his aged eyes, after ye have received the paternal benediction from his prophetic lips. Potiphar will soon have his attention attracted by other objects, so that he shall not touch your life; you will yet see him, and embrace him as your friend; for Sabrina shall one day be made to confess her guilt. I leave you, Joseph, but remember ye the God of your fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart. I have prejudiced the keeper much in your favour. The peace of the everlasting covenant be with you." So saying, he shrouded himself in darkness, and the young patriarch saw him no more. But, O! what pleasure did the seraph's melodious voice cause to thrill through the heart of the prisoner? Even in a prison he was wrapt up in the

suburbs of heaven. As soon as the morning began to dawn, Chorion, the keeper from whose eyes sleep had been banished all the night, visited every apartment in the prison, and when he came to Joseph's cell, he stood motionless with awful reverence of his prisoner; and as soon as he could speak, with a faltering voice he said, "I am sorry, sir, that you have been so ill-used. I wish I had known your desert before, then these servile chains should not have disgraced your limbs." So saying, he took off his irons, led him up to his own apartments, and treated him with the utmost respect.

That very day a courier from the frontiers of the kingdom arrived at the war-office, with advice that the Ethiopians, then a warlike people, had invaded those parts of the empire most contiguous to them; wherefore Potiphar was dispatched at the head of the army to put a stop to their ravages; an expedient that took off his attention from Joseph, and kept him long at a distance from Memphis; during which time, our injured hero continued a prisoner, neglected and forgotten. But the same divine and ever watchful Providence which prospered him in the house of Potiphar, followed him still in the house of his prison, and succeeded all the works of his hands.

Amongst the many prisoners that were confined for different crimes were Florillo, the king's principal cup-bearer, and Labonah, the chief baker. Having received charge of all the prisoners from Chorion, the keeper, Joseph frequently visited them, and soon contracted an intimacy with them. Making his morning visit to Florillo and Labonah one day, after he had been near a year in prison, he found a pensive sadness louring upon their heavy countenances. "What is the matter with you, my friends?" said he; "It appears by your countenances that your hearts are sorrowful. May I beg to know the cause? If any thing

within my power can be of service to you, my assistance may be depended upon.”—“Alas, sir,” replied the butler, “assistance can come from the immortal gods alone. Our case seems to be beyond the arm of humanity to remedy. Each of us have had a dream ominous of some important event, but what it may portend is to us a secret, involved in the most cloudy mystery.”

Joseph observed, that dreams are not always to be regarded, and even such as are significant and ominous must have their interpretation from heaven. “Will you tell me your dreams,” said he, “for some I have interpreted; and I promise you at least I will not deceive you. But it would add greatly to the kindness, if you would give me with your dreams some account of your past lives, and I, in my turn, will freely communicate to you every material part of my own history.”

“I am,” said the butler, “the only son of Arba, an Elamite, who, dying when I was very young, left me under the care and direction of Athgar, my uncle by the mother’s side. The tender and delicate usage which I experienced from my parents was changed into rough and vigorous treatment by my uncle; and although so very young I was made to feel the difference between paternal affection, and the guardianship of the nearest kinsman. Possessed of my father’s substance, which he was to husband to my advantage, he relished the sweets of it so much, that he entertained thoughts of keeping it as his own property, and took care to let me know that I was solely dependant upon him for the means of my subsistence. Conscious that in a land of oppression, where my uncle had principal rule, there was little prospect of power giving place to equity, I was obliged for my own safety patiently to bear my injuries; imagining, upon no ill ground, that complaint of the grievances I suffered would only add to the weight of my oppressions. It

was not long before Cushi, an enterprising prince of a neighbouring people, upon some slight pretence quarrelled with the King of Elam, and invaded his territories. I was sent to the war by my uncle's command, and I had reason to fear with a view to rid me out of the way. But you may think that I had but little heart to fight in defence of a land where I had suffered such base oppression. Our army was far from being either spirited or disciplined like the Hummins under Cushi. The Elamites of distinction wallowed in luxury, whilst those of inferior rank groaned under oppression. Therefore, when they came to face the enemy, they could make but a faint resistance, and soon sought for safety in rapid flight. Many were cut to pieces as they fled, and many were taken prisoners by the Hummins, amongst whom I was one. It was my lot to be brought to Memphis, and sold to one of the stewards of Pharaoh's household; and I must say in honour of my lord, that I have met with more hospitable friendship, although a slave in the royal palace, than I ever received under my uncle's roof, where my own property should have procured me welcome.

“But the barbarous man did not long enjoy either my estate or his own; for the Elamites, unable ever to stand before the Hummins, Cushi soon became master of the whole kingdom, and divided it among his faithful followers. Meanwhile I was put into the lowest and most servile office in the palace; which was much more agreeable to me than to live near to a kinsman, who had in my person violated all the laws of hospitality. My advancement was by slow degrees from one place to another, till it pleased his majesty to enfranchise me, and place me near his person. I had long served in the capacity of cup-bearer, when his majesty was taken with a violent disorder in the viscera, which his physicians judged to be the effect of poison; and as I had the inspection of all the wine which he

drank, and my friend Labonah of all the fruits and baked meats presented at the royal table, we were by special order seized and committed to prison till further orders. But far be it from Florillo so much as to wish the least inconvenience to his royal master. May Heaven preserve the life of Pharaoh, to be a blessing to the land, whatever becomes of me. Last night I had a dream which greatly disturbs me, apparently big with some important event. I thought there was a vine before me, which divided itself into three luxuriant branches, each of which blossomed, budded, and brought forth the most delightful grapes that I had ever beheld, and that in the greatest plenty. I thought that I took of the grapes that were fully ripe, and pressed them into Pharaoh's onyx cup, and presented to him the most mellow and best flavoured wine that I remembered ever to have seen. His majesty drank the wine, and smiling, said, he hoped I would always procure him such wine as this; upon which I awoke full of anxiety about the event."

"My friend," said the son of Jacob, "for your having drank of the cup of affliction, entitles you to that endearing appellation, you may make yourself very easy about your dream; for the God of heaven, who regards the cry of the oppressed, sends you by me a good interpretation of it. Before you was a luxuriant vine, a gift of God to undeserving men, the fruit of which composeth differences, creates friendship, dissolves care and melancholy, and turns our sadness into joy. The three branches are three days, which shall be productive of great events in your favour; for, on the third day, the king shall raise you up out of the prison, restore you to your office, to the good graces of your master, and to the glowing embrace of your wife and children. I beg, Florillo, that you may think of me. I have undergone oppressions, at least equal to yours, and am here unjustly confined, for pre-

ferring my own, and my master's honour, to the brutal pleasures of the flesh. It will be easy for you, when ye regain your master's confidence, to make mention of me to him, and procure my release."

Labonah, the cook, having heard the favourable interpretation of his companion's dream, and hoping that his would be equally so, began and related it to Joseph as follows, "I thought I had upon my head three baskets made of the whitest osier, filled with provision for Pharaoh's table: in the first basket was bread, made of the kidney of the finest wheat; in the second were all manner of tasteful viands; and in the third and uppermost were savoured baked meats, such as my master loveth; but, in spite of all my care, as I passed along, I could not preserve my charge from the rapine of the filthy birds, which eat the baked meats out of the uppermost basket."—"I pity your circumstances, my friend," said Joseph, "and wish it was in my power to give comfort to you: but your fate, alas! is determined. The baskets are three days; yet within three days, the king will order you to be beheaded, after which your body will be hanged on a gibbet, and the birds of the air will eat the flesh from off your bones; nor will it be in your power to shun the threatening evil. What you have done to deserve it, I know not; but such is the decree of unerring Providence. Let me therefore advise you to make confession to the God of heaven, implore his mercy to pardon your sins, and grace to fit you for another world; for you have little more than two days to live in this. Let your case be ever so desperate, with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption to them who call upon him."

"I see, then," returned Labonah, "that judgment and justice sleepeth not, but sometimes overtakes the offender, and when he thinks himself most secure. I am indeed clear from every bad design upon Pharaoh.

A thought of poisoning him never entered my mind. Yet I exasperated him, when I found myself arrested without a cause, and wished the deed to have been done, of which I was accused, that I might have had something worthy of imprisonment and death. But this was only the effect of ungovernable passion; though, according to the law of Egypt, it will be deemed high treason, and worthy of death. But, alas! although I account myself in this to be innocent, it is long since I merited the death now to be inflicted on me. So that however iniquitous I account the sentence of Pharaoh, that of the gods is just. I am a Lybian by birth. Obed, my father, left my elder brother and I possessed of his whole estate, which was very considerable. Osmyn, my brother, was industrious and frugal, by which means he greatly increased his wealth, gained the friendship of his superiors, and the veneration of people of lower birth. For my own part I minded nothing but pleasure, and those were my choicest companions who were the greatest voluptuaries. By these means my wealth was impaired, and I brought to wish my niggardly brother, as I then called him, out of the way, that I might possess myself of his estates. Glad would I have been if some fatal accident had clipped the thread of his life asunder; but it was long before I could come to the resolution of destroying him myself. However, at last, by the advice of a lewd woman, I gave him a poison that stole insensibly into the mass of blood, and by slow degrees stopped up the springs of life. It was long before its effects became apparent, though at last it put a period to his days, and I took possession of his estate, as being his heir at law. Some years I lived in the quiet enjoyments of the fruits of my brother's toil, and of my own unrighteousness, when an unhappy circumstance obliged me to leave all behind, and seek for safety in a foreign country.

Having contracted an intimacy with the wife of a considerable man in the neighbourhood, I had the misfortune to stay later than usual one evening when the husband was not expected to come home ; but, to our utter confusion, he entered the chamber, and found us conversing criminally together. How nearly, alas ! is one evil allied with another. To conceal our shame, and prevent him from obtaining legal redress, I rose in a fury, flew to my poignard, and plunged it into his breast before he had time to reflect upon his own dishonour. When I had perpetrated the horrid deed, I hastened from the scene of murder, and retired to rest in my own apartment. In the third watch of the night, I was surprised by a supernatural light, which darted into my chamber, and illuminated every corner of it. Unused to such a phænomenon, my blood froze in my veins, my hair stood upright on my head, and all the horrors of my guilt stared me in the face. The light increased, and I clearly saw my brother Osmyn, clad in celestial attire, standing by my bedside, whilst he thus addressed me : “ Wretched Labonah, will thy murdering hand never be tired with shedding innocent blood ? Was it not enough to possess yourself of my estate, by murdering of me, but you must go and violate your neighbour’s bed ? And, was it not enough that you robbed him of his honour, and his wife of her virtue, but, like a villain inured to bloodshed, you must drench your thirsty sword in his honourable blood ? Do not ye fear the awful God, who hates injustice and violence and with whom no unrepenting murderer can dwell ? Can you spare no time from your riot and wantonness, to think but a little of the tremendous audit, to which you will soon be called ? Can you bear an eternity of unspeakable torment, rather than forego your sensual gratifications ? It is an awful choice, Labonah, yet that choice seems to be yours. Arise, guilty man, arise and flee to some foreign country,

where the vengeance of man will not be able to reach thee. But, remember, the vengeance of God will follow thee even there, and bring thee to condign punishment, both in this life and that which is to come, unless thou repentest of, and forsakest thy vicious habits." So saying, the vision departed. As soon as I was somewhat recovered from my fright, I collected all my money and jewels, and instantly departed for Egypt; in which kingdom I went through many scenes, too tedious to mention, before I rose to the dignity of my late station. Too late I now see, that honour and integrity shall preserve them who are guided thereby; and that however pleasant sensual intelligences for the present may be, the end of them is bitter as worm-wood."

Early on the third morning a chariot rolled up to the gates of the prison, in which was a reverend old man, whose silver hairs hung down in graceful ringlets upon his shoulders; he was come as Florillo's friend, with special order to restore the cup-bearer to his dignity. Along with this senior prince, Joseph beheld a young lady, who gave him much uneasiness afterwards. She was the beauteous virgin, Asenath, the only daughter of the prince of On, who was also high priest of Heliopolis. An artless modesty greatly improved the native elegance and matchless graces of her outward form. Her cheeks were a lovely mixture of the rose and lily, and her eyes a sprightly blue. Her hair in careless elegance descended low, and partly covered the strings of jet and pearl which adorned her comely neck. The first sight of her wounded the youthful son of Jacob, and kindled an uneasy, unknown passion in his heart. Till now he never had felt the vacuum left in his breast for his other self. But now the damsel had fixed her empire in his heart, and the lovely image of the fair unknown wanted perpetually before his eyes, whilst he lan-

guished for the absent substance. But hopeless was his passion ; he is a prisoner, accused of a capital transgression of the laws, and she a person of elevated rank. " This, this," he cried, " must confound all my hopes, and I, alas, must languish under a wound incurable !"

Florillo replaced in his office, a guard arrived at the king's command, and conducted despairing Labonah to the place of execution, where Joseph's prediction was amply verified upon him. But the courtier, advanced again to favour, forgot the friendship of Joseph the prisoner.

Sabrina's rage had long subsided ; her deadly hate turned into female tenderness and kind relentings. Her thoughts repentant, accuse her rashness. And O her heart is pierced with poignant pain at the thought, that her mad revenge causes him, for whom she languishes, to lay in an offensive dungeon : whilst she had it not in her power, without exposing her own shame, to administer the least consolation to the injured victim of her rage, or procure the smallest degree of relief for herself. And thus she languished away a miserable, dying life at home, whilst Potiphar was dealing slaughter and death among the warlike Ethiopians, and Joseph lay neglected and forgot in prison.

" A deep remorse, from conscience of her sin,
With constant horrors, vext her soul within ;
Her thoughts ten thousand racking torments *fœci*,
Yet in her treach'rous crime obdurate still ;
Her life and youthful spirits melt away,
Her beauty withers with a swift decay ;
By day she wildly raves, consumes the night
In thoughtless watchings and imagined fright,
While airy terrors glide before her sight ;
Pale ghosts with wide distracted eye-balls stare,
And burning spectres through the darkness glare."

BOOK V

Pharaoh's dreams.—The convocation of the clergy.—Joseph interpreteth the dreams.—Potiphar comes to solicit Joseph's enlargement, Sabrina having confessed the truth to him.—Joseph made lord chancellor of Egypt.—Builds granaries for receiving corn.—The king proposeth a marriage to him.—He is greatly perplexed, being in love with an unknown lady.—The match is proposed to the Princess Asenath, who rejects it, not knowing that he was lord chancellor.—Their astonishment and joy at meeting.—The death of Judah's sons; it renews his sorrow for his violence to Joseph.

THE time of Joseph's suffering elapsed; on the very night before his enlargement, the monarch had two heavenly inspired dreams, which baffled the skill of his diviners. He fancied himself by the side of the river Nile, where the monsters of the flood sport themselves on the oozy shore; he saw seven oxen of an enormous size, fat and well-fed, ascend out of the river, and feed upon the herbage of the neighbouring verdant meadow: afterwards arose seven meagre and ill-looking beasts, upon which there seemed hardly to be flesh enough to keep their bones together; they also went and grazed on the same meadow, and presently devoured all its verdure. Still hungry, they set upon the fat oxen and eat up them likewise, and yet continued lean and hungry as ever. A sight so strange in itself impressed the monarch's mind so deeply that he awoke in confusion, and sleep departed from his eyes. Towards morning he dreamed again, and lo! he was in the midst of a fertile field, admiring the gifts of Ceres, when to his wonder and surprise there sprang up instantaneously seven of the largest and loveliest ears of wheat that ever the earth produced; and, presently

after, there sprang up beside them seven thin and blasted ears, which contained nothing at all but dust and chaff; and, what was very strange, the thin and blasted ears fell upon and devoured the others, yet still continued thin and blasted themselves as before. Such were the dreams of Pharaoh, and the interpretation was given him likewise in his sleep; but, awaking in confusion of mind, the interpretation was gone, and he retained only the dreams.

Early in the morning he summoned a convocation of all such doctors in the metropolis that were famous for learning in the Egyptian sciences. Each appeared in the habit of his order, trailing behind him the ensigns of his reverence. But all in vain their priestly parade; for the dumb idols which they adored could not speak the interpretation of the mystery. Every priest has recourse to different schemes of augury, and each produced different interpretations from his neighbours: but all of them were rejected by the king, who well enough knew that none of them agreed with the interpretation that he had seen in his sleep, although he could not remember it himself. All the attempts of the priests became abortive, and Pharaoh's rage kindling against them for their impositions, the cup-bearer recollected his error, hasted before the king, and thus humbly addressed him:

“O king, live for ever! I humbly sue for pardon, as I have greatly offended, and have not till now recollected my fault. Your majesty may well remember, that falling under your royal displeasure, the chief baker and I were imprisoned. It came to pass that each of us had a dream on the same night, which greatly troubled us, as no interpretation could be found. I dreamed that before me was a noble vine, bearing three luxuriant branches, each of which budded, blossomed, and brought forth large clusters of grapes, which ripened whilst I looked on; I held my

lord's onyx cup in my hand, took the grapes and pressed them into it, and gave it into the hands of my lord to drink; your majesty drank, and was highly pleased with the flavour of the wine. The baker also dreamed, and lo! upon his head were three baskets, in the uppermost of which was all manner of baked meat for Pharaoh; and, as he brought them to the royal table, the birds of heaven descended and eat the meats out of the basket, nor could he keep them away. The next morning, as we sat sad and sorrowful, an amiable young man, an Hebrew, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, and who is there unjustly confined, came in and interpreted both our dreams according to the event. The happy Florillo he restored to his master's favour; but the wretched Labonah he hanged. Will it please my lord the king to order the young man before you, and I doubt not but he will interpret both of your majesty's dreams."

The impatient monarch immediately ordered Joseph to be brought from prison into the royal presence. Clothed in decent apparel, he came ready prepared to give the king an answer; for Gabriel, his friendly guardian, had appeared to him, and related both the dreams and interpretation of them, and withal gave him suitable instructions relative to the government of Egypt. As he approached the throne with reverence, the eyes of all were attracted by the graces of his person, which were greatly enlivened by the blush of modesty which glowed upon his countenance. He bowed before the monarch, and silently waited his commands.

The moment that Pharaoh beheld the face of Joseph, he saw something in his countenance that attracted his friendship: he took him gently by the hand, and said; "There is a servant of mine, who has given you the character of a very wise man, especially in the matter of opening hidden mysteries, of which, he

says, he has had abundant proof in his own experience. I also have had my dreams, the interpretations of which are dark and difficult, yet portending some great event." Here he related his dreams, and requested that Joseph would lay aside all fear, and reveal the simple truth, however disagreeable it might seem.

With a calm and serene countenance, yet with an elevated air, that displayed the majestic dignity of his person, he replied, —“ Let Pharaoh give glory to the God of heaven, who in his great condescension makes known unto the king what he is about to bring to pass on the earth. The dreams, my lord, were two in form, yet one in substance and signification. The first seven oxen and ears of corn, both mean the same thing, and reveal to Pharaoh, that there shall be seven years of such excessive plenty of all sorts of grain, as was never known in any kingdom from the beginning, as appears by the bulk and fatness of the first seven oxen, and the largeness and fulness of the first seven ears of corn. The second seven meagre and ill-looking cattle, and the seven thin and blasted ears, denote also seven years of such scarcity as has never been known in the world, for there shall be neither earing nor harvest and whereas, the latter lean and ill-looking cattle, eat up the fat and well-favoured, and the thin and blasted ears devour those that were ripe and full; it shews that the seven years of plenty will not produce sufficient to supply the seven years of famine, unless the best economy is established in the land. Let my lord the king consider, that the great Governor of all raiseth up certain men to sovereign rule over their fellow creatures, that they may be as fathers unto them, and provide for their peace, safety, and supply. Thy God, O Pharaoh, who established thy throne, hath not revealed this to thee, with a view to afflict your royal mind, but that by taking proper measures for preserving the luxuriant superfluity of the first seven

years, thou mayest be able to supply the wants of thy people, during the seven years of famine, that they perish not with hunger. Wherefore, my advice is, that your majesty look out for some wise and honest man, suitably qualified, and give him a commission for this purpose, that the burden may be the lighter upon the king."

The king looked with admiration upon Joseph all the while he was speaking, astonished to find so much wisdom in a youth; and, as soon as he had done speaking, sprung from the throne, and grasped him in his arms with all the ardour of friendship, and said, "Yes, this is the interpretation, and thou art the man who was presented to me in my sleep, to be my assistant in a work so great; I embrace thee, therefore, as one sent by the God of heaven, to be a saviour to the people. And where, my lords," said he to his courtiers, "shall we find one endued with wisdom and discretion equal to him?" Now the butler, who all this time stood by a silent but delighted auditor, came up, and tenderly embraced his quondam friend, begged pardon for his long neglect, and hoped that Joseph would not repute it to want of regard. Joseph told him, that the Lord's time was not till now come.

The king then gave command to the master of his wardrobe, to take Joseph away, and clothe him in superb array. Just as he parted from the king's presence, one of the lords in waiting entered, and informed his majesty, that Potiphar, his general, waited in the hall, and requested a private audience upon matters of great importance. "Let him come in," said the king, "for he is a good man." The king retired with Potiphar into an anti-chamber, and thus he preferred his suit. "May it please your majesty, immediately before I went by your commission against the Ethiopians, I committed the steward of my house to prison, on my wife's accusing him with an attempt

to ravish her ; it was, indeed, my intent to have spoke to your majesty to have had him put to death ; but, thanks to the gods, the suddenness of the invasion, and the urgency of the king's command, together with my regard for the public good, made me utterly forget my own affairs. My wife, upon my return, hath withdrawn her charge, entreating me, to procure his release, and indemnify him for his unjust imprisonment. This favour, therefore, I would humbly entreat your majesty ; and if it is agreeable to take him under your sacred protection, for he is one of the most virtuous and wise of the human race. Glad should I be to enjoy him as my friend and companion in my own house ; but circumstances forbid his re-admission there."

The king heard with attention, and rightly suspecting that Joseph was the person in question, ordered him to be brought again into his presence. But how great was Potiphar's surprise, to see his friend, his ill-used Joseph, brought unto the king clothed in purple, with a chain of gold and diamonds about his neck. He stood motionless for some time, then with an agitated voice, he abruptly said, " It is he." And flying to his embrace, he held as if he grew unto him. Joseph, equally astonished on his part to find such a change, said, " I rejoice, my master, once more to embrace you as my friend ; and indeed, sir, I never gave you cause to be otherwise."—" I know it, Joseph, I know it," returned he ; " but, if his majesty will permit me, I will give you an account how it is that my friendship hath returned to its proper channel.

" You told me, Joseph, on that detested night that I sent you to the dungeon, that the God whom you and your fathers adore, would, by some means or other, clear up your innocence, and detect the guilt of your accusers. It is done, my friend ; your prediction is fulfilled. Your poor, unhappy mistress has paid

dearly for her folly; she is a proper object of your pity; let her then be ever free from your resentment. The accursed nurse, the wretched Syrena, was more to blame than my fond Sabrina; but I was more to blame than both. How could I think that female virtue could be insensible of your attracting charms? I delighted to present you to her, rejoiced to see her at any time look friendly upon you, not considering the danger to which I exposed my poor, unhappy wife. Whereas, I ought to have concealed you entirely from her sight. But I exposed her to the snare, and I wonder not if she was entangled. I grieved to see her beauty fade away like the decaying rose, and all her wonted vivacity changed into a settled melancholy. She lost all taste for pleasure, for amusements, company, or dress; her sleep was unseasonable, and disturbed with distressing dreams. And oft have I heard her in secret, mourning her betrayed and injured lord, Potiphar. Cautious of adding to her distress, I avoided searching into the cause of it; till, last night, she sent for me into her apartment, where she has been for several days confined to her bed, dangerously ill of a fever. "O my lord!" said she, "can you forgive the most wretched creature that ever was confided in by an indulgent and over credulous husband? I have betrayed you, my lord, and I cannot die without informing you of my guiltiness. Had the injured Hebrew been no more virtuous than Sabrina, your bed had been stained with the vilest pollution."—"What!" cried I, "is he not guilty?"—"No, my lord," returned she, "he is not guilty; his virtue is inflexible. Neither tears, intreaties, nor threats could shake his steady mind. He trusted in his God, and was delivered. I alone am guilty. I conceived an involuntary passion for him the first time you presented him to me. Conscious of its baseness, I did what I could to stifle it; but do what I would, it

grew stronger upon me, till it burned as a flame in tolerable. Encouraged by my nurse, I gave scope to my wild desires, did all that I could to entice him, but to no purpose. His regard to his God and his master, prevailed over all my charms and snares; and by his stability he hath convinced me, that there is something in piety and virtue, which I am unacquainted with. O my lord! may I hope to hear the voice of your forgiveness before I depart? And, O! how heartily could I beg forgiveness of injured virtue, was I not fearful that the sight of the Hebrew would overcome me."

"Yes, Sabrina," replied I, "I forgive you with all my heart; this honest, this frank confession, is a certain sign of returning virtue. I embrace you, my love, and will hasten Joseph's enlargement, and reinstate him in the family. "Oh! never, never," answered she; "I shall not dare to behold him again: for although I feel nothing but the most laudable friendship for him now, I shall never dare to expose my weakness to danger so imminent any more. Do you, my lord, what you can to serve him in any other way, but do not let me see him. When I am dead you may use your discretion; but save your poor, weak, and unstable spouse from temptation." She said, and I promising to comply with her request, left her to rest. Having unburthened her mind, she slept composedly all the night, and I have not seen such calm serenity on her countenance for a long time, as this morning when I visited her, before I came to wait on his majesty.

"But I see, Joseph, that your God, in whom you trusted, would not permit Potiphar to have the pleasure of presenting you to the king; but, whosoever he is that has that honour, shall be my friend for ever." Pharaoh replied, "Joseph has preferred himself to my regard, and your story, Potiphar, hath rivetted him

in my esteem. It serves to illustrate and confirm what the native loveliness of his features indicate ; and let me say, it does not a little embellish the character of my noble captain, to be so ready to repair an injury done through misinformation. Go home, my good lord, and let poor penitent Sabrina know, that Joseph is second in dignity and power in the kingdom of Egypt. The particulars of which you shall be informed of, Potiphar, at another time."

The same virtue that enabled Joseph to bear with fortitude the adversity to which his innocence had exposed him, enabled him now to hear his praise echoed from one to another, without pride or vanity. His purple robe, and almost imperial dignity, altered not the native humility and modesty of his mind ; whereby he retained his dignity unenvied by those of inferior rank.

Pharaoh issued a royal proclamation, in which he nominated Joseph as high steward of Egypt, and required all his subjects, of what rank soever, to aid and assist him in whatsoever work he should undertake, or in whatsoever else he might require. Joseph on his part behaved with so much equity, discretion, and benevolence, that the people in general rejoiced to see the reins of government put into a hand so suitable.

Advanced to power, the first thing he did was to establish the strictest economy at court, to abridge the king's expenses, as much as consisted with the dignity of so great a monarch, that the exchequer might furnish him money sufficient to buy up all the overplus of annual grain, and provide proper repositories for receiving it, when purchased. A square mile, on a pleasant meadow adjoining to Memphis, was selected for the seat of his granaries. The spring approached, and every thing in nature appeared to bear a fertile appearance ; for the earth brought forth

not in its usual course, but in great abundance. At the close of the year Joseph issued a proclamation, wherein he signified by royal authority, that at the king's granaries a certain price would be given for all the corn that should be delivered to the servants in waiting. The proclamation brought prodigious quantities of corn from all quarters, as soon as the overflowing of the Nile enabled them to bring it by water carriage: and this was continued annually for the space of seven years, by which time he had filled every place that he could procure with grain.

One day King Pharaoh took him into his closet, and thus addressed him: "Joseph, I and Egypt in general have reason to consider you as a preserver and redeemer, raised up unto us against the day of calamity. As your God hath been pleased to send you amongst us, it behoves us to do what we can to make your accommodation agreeable. I have proposed a match for you, Joseph. Nay, do not be surprised: it is with one of the first ladies of the Egyptian empire for birth, beauty, and virtue. I intend to bespeak her for you this very day. Had I a daughter of my own, that I deemed worthy of you, she should be your bride; but as I cannot thus gratify myself, I have sought out one to whom, I think, even the greatest of monarchs can have no objection."—"I beg," said Joseph, "that your majesty will leisurely think of it, before you propose a matter of such importance. How would a princess of Egypt be debased in being given to a mean and once unhappy foreigner, whose birth is comparatively obscure!"—"Say no more of it," replied the king, "for the matter is already determined. It will be an honour to the greatest princess to be advanced to your bed."

This advantageous offer met not with that agreeable reception with Joseph as one would have expected. The fair unknown whom he had seen whilst a prisoner

had captivated his heart; for her he languished in secret, and could admit of no thoughts of another to have place in his mind. He knew not well how to conduct himself in a matter so delicate, but at all events he resolved to do no injustice to his first love, although unknown, by admitting a second to his embrace. Prince Potipherah being then at court, King Pharaoh proposed to him a match, between Joseph, lord high-chancellor of the kingdom, and the lovely Asenath, his virtuous daughter. The proposal was heartily embraced by the reverend prince, and at his master's command he went home to consult his daughter's inclinations. But now great was his surprise to find Asenath utterly averse to the honourable compact. "I entreat my father," she cried, with tears like pearls dropping down her cheeks: "I entreat that you will not oblige me to marry a man for whom I have not the slightest degree of desire, and who, since this proposal, is become the object of my real aversion."—"What objection can you have, Asenath," replied he, "to the lord high-chancellor, the favourite of both king and people? Inconsiderate woman, it is the greatest honour the king can confer upon you; and I insist on your embracing it, otherwise give me a plain account of your reasons for refusing it."—"Ah, sir!" said she, "the lord high-chancellor is not the man who can make me happy, and I would not marry till I can have the prospect of being happy in my husband."

Young Asenath was one of the party, who, to grace the nuptials of Potiphar and Sabrina, went to hunt the monster of the desert, and had seen the young Hebrew's distinguished gallantry, in rescuing his mistress from the ferocity of the desperate lion. Her young and tender heart could not but feel the impression of the many graces of his amiable person; but his generous valour most sensibly touched her. In

short, she conceived a most ardent and virtuous passion for him, and resolved, that if ever she should enter into the marriage relation, Joseph, the gallant Hebrew, should be the man of her choice. But seeing nothing of him for a long time, she conceived a dislike to all other men; and, notwithstanding the fame of the lord high-chancellor resounded through every Egyptian mansion, she never had the curiosity so much as to look upon him.

It was insisted on, however, by Pharaoh and Potipherah, that she should have an interview with Joseph: notwithstanding, they had both of them too much goodness, absolutely to force the inclinations of either. But when they met, what a delightful surprise was it to Joseph to realize in Asenath the features, the air, and the very person of the lovely virgin, whom he had seen whilst a prisoner; and for whom, although unknown, he had renounced the whole female race. Nor was Asenath's surprise inferior in viewing in the person of the lord high-chancellor, every feature and gesture of her almost adored Hebrew. Never did two come together with more consummate aversion to each other, and never were two more agreeably disappointed. "And is it you, my lovely fair, for whom I so long have sighed, that unknown to me his majesty designed for my spouse:" said Joseph. "O my love, you cannot conceive what antipathy I entertained against you; but, blessed be the God of heaven, who brings the object of my warmest wishes to my bosom."—"And can it be possible that you, my lord, are the very deliverer of the fair Sabrina?" said Asenath: "ever since that jovial day, the noble, the gallant Hebrew, hath been the sole lord of all my affection. What a blessed Providence is this, that crowns my wishes by contradicting my inclination; for I hated you, Joseph; I hated the lord high-chancellor of Egypt, for the sake of my amiable

Hebrew. Let us adore the wisdom and goodness of that God, who has in such a desirable manner disappointed our fears." The nuptials were solemnized the ensuing day, in the presence of the monarch. Great joy abounded amongst the people upon the occasion, and every body wished prosperity to the new married couple.

Whilst Joseph continued prosperously to govern Egypt, it pleased God to visit eloquent Judah with a remembrance of his former treachery. Er, his first-born, mature in years, married a damsel whose name was Tamar, young, beautiful, and virtuous, in many respects surpassing her fellows. Er was atheistical and profligate, disregarded the commands of Abraham's God, and sought only to gratify a sensual appetite, and wallow in the pleasures of the flesh. Judah and Shunah, his parents, endeavoured to correct the irregularities of his life by wholesome precepts and examples; but all their instructions he foolishly rejected, and sought for death in the error of his way. His disposition was the very reverse of Joseph's amiable qualities; virtue was the delight of the one, but vice alone was the pursuit of the other. It happened on a day, that Er was sent to a distant part of the country upon some rural business, when going past a fatal thicket, a panther sprung from the midst of it, and instantly tore him to pieces. Not returning at the time expected, messengers were dispatched to seek for him, and found him miserably torn by that monster of the wood. Then it was that Judah began to realize in his own experience the heart-wringing agonies of his father, upon Joseph's bloody coat being presented to him. Then the pathetic address of his suppliant brother, begging for life, returned to his mind, with all its affecting circumstances. And to the loss of his son he had the painful reflection of its being a just judgment of the Omnipotent upon him, for having

joined his brethren to bring affliction upon chosen Jacob.

That the name of the elder-born might not become extinct in Judah's family, Tamar was given to Onan, that seed might be raised up to his deceased brother. But Onan's heart being attracted by other charms, and knowing that should the marriage-bed become fruitful, the children would not bear his name, he took care to prevent the fruits of their intercourse, though he did not altogether deny the pleasures of the conjugal state. What he did was offensive to the eye of infinite holiness, and the most High, to avenge himself of his impiety, struck him dead with a blast of lightning darted from theaërial stores of wrath.

O Judah! how sensibly was thy heart affected by this second stroke of the divine hand! How didst thou read thy sin in thy punishment! Both thy sons snatched away by death in the prime of their days. Tamar, thy daughter-in-law, had the bitterness of burying two husbands, ere she reached the meridian of life. Shelah alone, young and tender, support the hopes of thy family. How did thy heart pant with jealous fear, lest vengeance should write thee down childless, and summon young Shelah to follow his elder brethren. Nothing but the fear of Simeon and Levi kept Judah back from making a full confession of his guilt before the venerable patriarch. But the fear of them restrained him still from duty, especially as he could never hear in what manner the Ishmaelites had disposed of Joseph.

BOOK VI.

Joseph purchaseth the spare corn in Egypt.—The famine begins to be felt.—Jacob sendeth his sons down to Egypt to buy corn.—Simeon's dream by the way.—They are brought before Joseph.—He questions them strictly, and chargeth them with being spies.—They are imprisoned three days.—The brethren reason concerning their cruelty to Joseph.—Simeon bound and cast into prison.—The rest set out on their journey, and are surprised at finding their money returned in their sacks.—They arrive in Canaan, and relate to their father all that befel them in Egypt.—They persuade Jacob to send Benjamin along with them.—Jacob favoured with a divine vision, and is comforted.

PHARAOH had such proofs daily of Joseph's wisdom and fidelity, that he fixed no limits to his power: whatever was done throughout the land of Egypt he was the doer of it, and whatever he did prospered in his hand. His equipage was next in grandeur to that of his majesty himself, and only in the throne was Pharaoh greater than he. He went through the whole kingdom, provided granaries, appointed deputies in every province for purchasing of all sorts of grain, the advantage of which was afterwards found, not only by the Egyptians, but other kingdoms adjacent.

As his duty and pleasure ran in the same channel, he collected corn sufficient, during the seven years of plenty, to supply the Egyptian empire for twice seven years of famine, had it been the pleasure of God to continue it so long; and this he was prompted to by his native benevolence, that thereby he might assist other distressed states. Never was a person more venerated than Joseph was by the Egyptians, when they saw every thing come to pass according to his prediction. All held him to be a peculiar favourite of the gods, and many of the vulgar could not help

believing him to be some celestial deity, come down in human form to be the preserver of their beloved nation. For the Egyptians were under no doubt at all, that they were the people most dear to heaven. What different treatment did Elijah meet with from the seed of Israel, when he foretold the famine that fell out in his days ! He was accounted the troubler of Israel, and was glad to fly for his life.

Joseph had continued to purchase corn for the space of seven years ; but such was now the will of Providence, that the rains fell not at their season upon the mountains of Abyssinia, in their usual quantity, to feed the streams of the Nile : so that the waters measured not above seven cubits upon the Nilescope ; a quantity scarce sufficient to water the very lowest parts of the country. Of course there was very little grain produced in any part of the land, and that which grew was like Pharaoh's thin ears, not worth the reaping. Now the famine began sensibly to be felt in the land of Canaan ; and the Egyptians applied in their turn to their provident governor, to purchase food for their families.

The aged patriarch seeing the approach of pale hunger towards his family, made diligent inquiry where food might be procured for money ; and being informed that in Egypt only there was corn, he assembled his descendants, and thus addressed them. " You see, my sons, that the all-wise Governor, provoked by the sins of men, has denied the first and latter rains in their season. Those lofty seas, which ride upon the air, are not suffered to descend and visit the thirsty world. You see there is neither earing nor harvest in the land, our family provision is almost exhausted, and ghastly famine makes hasty strides towards the dwelling of Israel. But why stand we gazing fearfully one at another ? Let us use the means of support whilst we have them. We can but die. when the means

of life have forsaken us. I am informed that fertile Egypt abounds with provision, whilst the rest of the world is starving for want; and that so hospitable is the governor of that land, that he sends none away empty who applies unto him for relief. Arise therefore, my sons, go down thither, and bring us provision for money; for money will be useless to us, when the staff of bread is cut off from our mouths. Thus shall ye avoid seeing your wives and children perish for want of sustenance.—Go all of you, except Benjamin. I desire that he may be left to superintend our domestic affairs in your absence.” Benjamin being all that the patriarch now possessed of his dear departed Rachel, he could not bear the thoughts of his being exposed to the dangers of such a journey.

The sons of Israel readily agreed to his proposal, and departed the ensuing morning towards Egypt. Two days before they arrived at the capital, in the dead of the night as they slept in the inn, Simeon dreamed that he was at Dothan along with his brethren consulting the death of Joseph; which being determined, he thought that just as they were going to cast him into the pit, an invisible hand was stretched down from heaven, snatched Joseph from the threatening danger, and carried him out of their sight. And as it lifted Joseph from the earth, with a jostle tumbled Simeon himself into the pit designed for his brother. Alarmed with his danger, he awoke in a fright ere he reached the bottom. Hard as his flinty heart was, the impression of this dream made him realize the anxiety of Joseph's mind on that day of his calamity. Nor could he, notwithstanding his resolution and courage, prevent his heart being dejected under the apprehension that his dream was ominous of some event fatal to his peace. Therefore the rest of the journey was dull and unpleasant to him.

Joseph by the spirit of prophecy knew that the

famine was extensive, and reached even to the land of his fathers ; and therefore conjectured that, amongst the many who came for provision, his brethren also might arrive ; therefore described them to his steward, and directed him, that if such men should arrive, that they should not be served before they were brought before him. Accordingly when they came and applied at the granaries for corn, they were directed to wait on the governor's steward, who told them that he could not possibly give them an answer till his master, the lord high-chancellor, came home : but that being only gone out with his majesty for an airing, he would have them abide near the palace till noon, about which time he expected his return. They did so, and beheld such dazzling splendour in the king's and Joseph's equipage as they had never seen at any time before.

Brought before Joseph, he immediately recollected the features of every countenance, but they had not the least suspicion of him ; and, notwithstanding his eminent meekness and humanity, he could not help the recollection of their baseness. The sight of them brought all his sufferings afresh to his mind. They bow before him with the most humble reverence, with their faces towards the earth, and wait for him to ask their business. This brought his dreams also to his mind, and, with a borrowed sternness, he demanded their business with him, and directed his eye chiefly to Simeon.

Judah replied, for he was speaker at this time for the rest. " May it please your excellency, we are from the land of Canaan. Being pressed with the famine in our native country, hearing there was plenty of corn in Egypt, and also the fame of the governor's hospitality, we were induced to come down to purchase a little food for ourselves, our wives, and children, that they perish not in the general scarcity."

"Tell me not," said he, with a menacing countenance, "of such men as you being concerned in traffic. There is something in each of you that bespeaks you sprung from no common race; for by your deportment you might be the sons of a king. I suspect you to be men of birth, servants of some martial, enterprising state, come under this disguise to spy out the nakedness of the land."

"No, my lord," returned the parent of the Jews; "we are no spies, but true men; by the nakedness of our own country forced to seek for provision in a land more blessed with the bounties of Providence. We are strangers to court intrigue, and have no concern in martial achievements. Whatever may be the appearances of our persons, your excellency may assure yourself, that all our concern has been about cattle from our infancy; for your servants are not courtiers, but simple shepherds, and our only business in Egypt is to procure food for our families; for which we are very willing to pay whatever my lord may demand."

"No, no," returned Joseph, "such men as you have not the appearance of shepherds. Nor does your eloquence, my friend, discover you to be an attendant on the bleating herd. You would not be proper agents for carrying on a treacherous design against our state, if you had not sagacity enough to cover it over with dissimulation and guile. I tell you, you are spies, come with a bad design against the state."

"Far be it, my lord," said Judah, "from your servants to be guilty of the dissimulation that your excellency speaks of. I assure you that we are all shepherds, as our fathers for some generations backward have been. We are the descendants of Abraham, whose name perhaps your excellency has heard of. We ten are brethren, sons of one man in the land of

Canaan. One remains this day with our father, and the other, alas! is not now numbered among his brethren."

"Well," replied Joseph, "ye declare your innocence in point of treachery. But I shall not take your bare word for it, but will prove you; and if ye bear the trial, and approve yourselves to be true men, and no spies, you shall find in me a friend, and you shall have liberty to go and come at your pleasure, and traffic in all the coasts of Egypt; but if it is found that ye are traitors and spies, ye shall surely be put to death. By this shall ye prove yourselves to be honest men. Let one of you be dispatched to your father's house, and fetch that younger brother of whom ye speak, and then will it appear that your words are right. If you refuse this, it is a sign that your purpose is bad; and, as sure as Pharaoh lives, ye are spies upon our state."

"No, my lord, we are not spies, indeed," answered Judah with a submissive voice, "notwithstanding we have one reason wherefore we cannot with pleasure submit to your excellency's command. And that is not fear of being detected as spies, but the famine of our houses. For we left but barely sufficient to supply the wants of our wives and children, during the time necessary for us to come hither for food, and return again unto them. If we should do as my lord hath said, then must all our father's house perish for want in our absence, and we should be guilty of their blood. Wherefore, if nothing but that will satisfy your excellency of our fidelity, it is better for us to submit to death in a strange land, than to return, and be witnesses of the evil to come upon our dearest kindred; for we cannot survive the destruction of our father's house."

Joseph commanded his guards in waiting to take the ten brethren into custody, and carry them to prison, where he kept them three days and three nights;

but withal he gave secret orders to his steward to look well to them, to their servants and cattle, that they should lack nothing. On the third morning, as soon as the sun enlightened the earth, he ordered them all before him, and thus he addressed them: "I have considered all that ye have said when ye was last before me; and as there is a possibility of your testimony being true, I would not expose your old father, of whom ye spake, nor your wives and little ones, to the severity of famine; for I fear God, and am no stranger to the feelings of humanity. One condition I propose to you, which must and shall be complied with; and that is, one of you shall be left bound in the house of your prison, as an hostage to ensure your return; and all the rest of you shall go to your families with what provision you can carry; and, when ye come again, be sure you bring your younger brother along with you; which if you do, your hostage shall be delivered up to you, and ye shall all go in peace again to your father. But if you return not, he whom I shall secure as an hostage, shall pay for your unfaithfulness with his life."

"O," said Judah, "how doth one sin bring a lasting train of evils after it? Er and Onan are fallen victims to that justice which avengeth Joseph's afflictions; another is now demanded, and who knows what the issue will be? The guilt of our brother's blood pursues us, and embitters every providence. Our God leaves us to intreat in vain; because, when we saw the anguish of his afflicted soul, we would shew him no mercy, although he besought us with tears. Lord, thy conduct is just—we alone are guilty."

"Did not I," said Reuben, "do what I could to dissuade you from a deed so vile and barbarous? I used every argument I was master of, to prevail with you to save the child's life, but all in vain. And, with

a view to be able to restore him to his father's embrace, I proposed his being let down into the pit, and had performed my purpose the ensuing night, had I not been prevented by your untimely sale of him to strangers, who have carried him I know not whither. But an all-seeing and ever-watchful Providence, I doubt not, shelters him from injury in some country more hospitable, and affords him that peace and pleasure which he was denied in the house of his brethren, whilst we, his persecutors, are justly pursued by the avenging hand of Joseph's God."

"I freely confess," said Simeon, "that I never felt a proper remorse for that sin against my brother, till five nights ago, when I realized the anguish of his soul in what I myself felt in my dream. And from what I then felt, I have reason to fear, that something of a very afflicting nature is before me; for I find myself exactly in Joseph's circumstances when he was last in the pit: since then, my mind has never been free from either the distressing idea of the boy's anxiety, or the overwhelming grief of our poor father, when Levi and I presented the bloody coat to him at Mamre. But let what will come, I find I deserve it. I should wish to be as submissive in my affliction, as I was resolute in perpetrating the guilty deed."

Little did the sons of Jacob imagine, that the lord high-chancellor understood their discourse; for the better to conceal his relation to them, he had spoke all along by an interpreter, whom he caused to withdraw as soon as his brethren began to confer among themselves. With all the distance that Joseph affected, with all the resolution he could summon up, he found that he could not suppress the rising tide of fraternal sympathy, ready to burst from his eyes upon hearing his brethren's penitent conference; therefore he turned him into a private apartment, and gave free vent to the emotions of his manly heart. And as soon

as he had composed himself, he returned to them into the hall, and communed with them about the affairs of their native country, till their sacks were filled, and their camels and asses loaded with corn. But never was there such a struggle between sound policy and brotherly tenderness, as Joseph felt in his disturbed mind. Brotherly love urged him to fly to the embraces of his brethren, but sound policy advised to stay his caresses, till he had proved their regard to Benjamin his brother. Sound policy will prevail over passion, where wisdom presides.

It was just as Simeon's foreboding heart had presaged; for Joseph selected him from amongst his brethren, to detain him as hostage for the return of the rest: although it went now against the tenderness of his inclination to give pain even to Simeon, since he had some proof of his penitence. But he found himself under the necessity of either detaining one, or discovering himself to them; the latter of which he chose not to do for the present. Simeon therefore was bound in the presence of his brethren, and conveyed to prison; whilst the rest were dismissed from the presence of Joseph, and began their journey towards Canaan; not without much reflection upon the calamity to which they were reduced, and their cruelty to Joseph, as the procuring cause of all.

Arrived at the inn, how great was their surprise, when Issachar, opening his sack to give his ass provender, found all the money he had given for his corn returned in the mouth of it; astonished at the event, he tells his brethren. Equally astonished, they fly every man to his sack to examine, and lo! in the mouth of every man's sack is found his money in full tale. In silent amazement they look at one another. Every one knows himself to have been clear; but no one man could be certain about his fellows. All alledged that the hand of their God was upon them

for evil : but no one could so much as conjecture how their money should come to be returned. Sleep departed from the eyes of the patriarchs that night ; for they expected every moment to hear the voice of the pursuers, coming to carry them back to the governor. In short, at last they considered the matter as a fraud put upon them, to find a pretext to enslave them. And well knowing that their detention in Egypt would prove the destruction of the house of Jacob, they resolved not to submit tamely to their betrayers, but to perish on the spot rather than be slaves to such perfidy, and to sell their lives as dear as possible. Now they lament the absence of Simeon, the strength of whose brawny arm they had heretofore amply proved : but all in vain their fears, and vain their desperate purposes. For Joseph had secretly commanded his chief factor to return all their money into their several sacks, in the same order in which it was found ; so that when morning came, none appeared in pursuit of them. They laded their cattle, and proceeded on their journey, every now and then looking behind them to see if any danger appeared ; and thus they proceeded from day to day, till they arrived at their own habitations.

The good old patriarch looking out, saw them at a distance moving on heavily, because of their loads of provision. And how did his aged heart beat thick with joy, to see them safely returned with food for their families ! But how soon did his joy abate, when he discovered that Simeon was missing ! They found themselves under a necessity of declaring all that had passed between the governor of Egypt and them, in their absence, and that Benjamin was demanded. Upon hearing of which the good man's heart failed him, and he could not forbear thus chiding them for their conduct. " Could not you, men of your years, never remarkable for ignorance, have gone and bought

provision for us, without revealing the circumstances of your family? What need was there for you to have mentioned that you had another brother at all? That could be nothing to a foreigner, nor would it have been at all inquired into, if you had not incautiously mentioned it. I cannot agree that Benjamin should go. On your account I am bereaved of my Joseph. Have you no more mercy on my feeble age, than to take Benjamin away also. All the things are against me."

Reuben, the elder-born, approached, and respectfully answered his father. "Were we insensible of the grief and affliction of a parent so venerable, we should debase ourselves below brutality itself. Let not Israel charge us with want of tender regard, if we have, through the necessity of circumstances, been induced to declare what he could wish to have been concealed. For my own part, I am of opinion, that the governor's countenance must greatly belie his heart, if any evil is to be apprehended at his hand: there is something so amiable and attractive in him, that I think I could, without hesitation, entrust my life in his hand: and, as a proof of my sincerity, I offer, that if my father will permit Benjamin to go along with his brethren as we have engaged, to leave my two sons, Honoch, and Phallu, as pledges for his return; and if any harm befall him, let them be slain."

"Ah, Reuben!" replied the aged man, "thou talkest in a simple style. Should Benjamin be lost, the death of my grandsons would but make the wound deeper and more painful. Joseph is already dead, Benjamin is all that is now left of Rachel, for whom I served your grandfather fourteen years; and should he go with you, and evil befall him as it did Joseph, my hoary head would come down with an insupportable load of sorrow to the grave. My son Benjamin shall not go down with you."

Aged Jacob soon perceiving that their late purchase was three-fourths expended, apprized his sons of the necessity of returning into Egypt to renew their stock of provisions, to prevent the devastations which meagre famine would otherwise make in their dwellings. "Go," said he, "my sons, return into Egypt, and buy us a little more food for the household."—"We go, sir," replied Judah, "if Benjamin go with us; but if he is not with us, we cannot go: for the lord-chancellor solemnly protested to us, that unless we brought our youngest brother with us, we should not see his face; and that if we did bring him, we should, under the shadow of his protection, have full liberty to traffic in any part of Egypt. Think, therefore, my father, what we are to do, for want will speedily be here."

The holy man, with a heart wrung with sorrow, replied, "Wherefore, Judah, dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the lord of the land that you had another brother; for I understand that you was speaker for your brethren?"

"Alas, sir! the man was very strict in examining of us concerning our state, our kindred, the number of our father's children; and we told him the truth in every thing. Could we certainly know that he would demand our brother of us, and had we known that he would say, Bring your brother down to me, we durst not have dissembled and uttered falsehood, for then we should have offended our God; and you yourself would have grieved for our transgression. Allow me to say, that my worthy father errs in his over-carefulness for Benjamin. We are all your sons as well as he; therefore equally intitled to your tender regard. But Simeon lies in chains in a foreign land, pale famine stares you and all of us, our wives and little ones, in the face. Nothing can save the life of Simeon but our return into Egypt with our brother Benjamin; and nothing can save our tender families at home, but

speedy supplies from that country. Send him with me, my father ; I will be surety for him, of my hand do ye require him. If you will send him, we will arise and go directly ; but, if not, we cannot go. We may as well stay at home and die by famine with our wives and little ones, as be put to the sword in a strange land. Determine, therefore, what we are to do, my father : for, unless we had thus lingered, we might have been all safely returned the second time. And let Israel consider that certain death awaits us all, if Benjamin is not permitted to go with us, and there is but a bare peradventure of danger to him if he goes. Remember, my father, the God of Bethel, in whom thou hast trusted, he is in Egypt as well as in Canaan. He is able to protect thy Benjamin in what land soever."

He ended here, and the pensive patriarch replied, "Well, Judah, your reasoning is home and conclusive. We will call the boy, and inquire at his own mouth : if he be willing, I shall not further oppose his going ; but if he is not willing, I will by no means constrain him.—Are you willing, Benjamin, to accompany your brethren through the dangers of another journey to Egypt ? They protest they will not go without you, and I am very unwilling to expose your young and tender years to the hardships and dangers of such a journey. Be free, my son, and speak your mind." Said Benjamin, "I should ill deserve to call Jacob my father, if I should so much as desire to shun any dangers to which my brethren are exposed. Far be it from me to delight in loitering at home, whilst they, by hardship and toil, are caring for me and my little ones. I am not only perfectly willing to go with them, my father, but even desirous of it ; and would have proposed it ere now, had it not been for fear of adding to your burden, my father : I want to see this lord-governor of Egypt. I know not how it is, but

ever since my brother Reuben gave you an account of him, I have found my mind unaccountably attached to him. And last night I dreamt that I stood in his presence along with my brethren, and I thought I saw something so unspeakably agreeable in him, that I could not but love him. But when he came to embrace me (for I thought he embraced me), I felt such a glow of friendship warm my bosom, that I never experienced the like in my life. For my part, I am of Reuben's mind, I fear no harm from the lord-governor."—"Well, my son," said the hoary patriarch, with a deep groan, "I must submit. God grant that ye be not mistaken in the man.

"But, my sons, take double money along with you, besides that which was returned in your sacks, and repay it; perhaps it might be done undesignedly by some of the overseers of the stores. And go not empty handed to the man, seeing a gift in the bosom pacifieth anger; but take with you a handsome present of the best produce of our land; such as balm, honey, spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds. And O, God Almighty, go thou with my sons, and give them favour in the sight of the governor."

The sons of Israel departed; the Lord appeared unto Jacob in a vision of the night, and said unto him, "Jacob, what seest thou?" Jacob replied, "I see an almond tree, exceeding fair, smooth, and strong in the trunk, branched out into twelve capital boughs, each of which are subdivided into innumerable branches, and all laden with fruit of the most luxuriant growth." The vision answered, "Thou hast well seen, Jacob. Thou art the beautiful almond tree; from thee twelve branches are sprung, which shall bring forth seed innumerable as the sand of the sea. Ask not how it can be done, seeing one branch is lopped off from the native stem. Be satisfied in this, that what infinite wisdom hath proposed, almighty

power can accomplish ; leave thy Benjamin to the care of his God, for thou shalt embrace him in safety." So spake the vision ; and, departing, left a glow of seraphic fervour in the patriarch's heart, something like that which he felt at Peniel, when like a prince he prevailed with God.

BOOK VII.

The sons of Israel arrive at Memphis with Benjamin.—They are invited to dine with the governor.—Their jealousy of some design against them.—Their meeting with Joseph.—His struggle with natural affection.—They dine with him.—His scheme to try their affection to Benjamin.—Benjamin is convicted of stealing Joseph's cup.—They all return to the palace.—Judah confesseth their former guilt.—Levi's lamentation for Benjamin.—Benjamin studieth to reconcile his brethren to his fate.—Simeon and Levi resolve to rescue him or die with him.—Joseph makes himself known to his brethren.—He comforts and encourages them.—Invites them and all his father's house to come and live in Egypt.—They regale themselves with Joseph, and depart from Egypt.

ARRIVED in Egypt, they were conducted into the governor's presence, who inwardly rejoiced to see the sons of his father safely returned in company with Benjamin his brother. "Well," said he, "you have fulfilled the condition, on your part, it behoves me to be equally faithful on mine ; I shall give orders for your brother's immediate release from prison." When he saw them altogether, he ordered his steward to kill a yearling, and make plentiful provision ; "for," said he, "these men shall be my guests to-day." Having given necessary orders for his household affairs, and having business to dispatch abroad, he left his brethren alone until noon. Now Judah approached the steward, and thus apologized for the money that was returned in their sacks. "O, my lord, we are under

great difficulties at present, and have need of you. friendship, as your influence with my lord the chancellor is great. When we came down at first, notwithstanding your lord was jealous of us, we had indeed no other business in Egypt but to buy food for our families. The corn we purchased, and, as we thought, paid for ; but, to our great surprise and grief, when we opened our sacks, every man found his money in full weight in the mouth of his sack. How it came there we cannot conceive. But willingly to deal uprightly with all men, we have brought that money which was returned again in our hands, besides the money which we would now lay out for fresh provision. Will it please my lord to accept the returned money, and pardon what oversight soever might occasion it? We have also brought a small present of the fruits of our land, for my lord the chancellor, which we beg you would present to him in our name."

"Your present for my lord," said the steward, "I willingly accept for him ; but as for your money, I cannot receive it, as you paid the full value when you received your corn. As to the money ye found in your sacks, make yourselves very easy about it. It is a gift of your God, from which no evil is likely to ensue. Set your hearts at rest, and compose yourselves ; for I have orders from my lord to inform you, that he expects you all to dine with him at noon, in his palace." As they did not much relish this invitation, they would gladly have excused themselves from the honour designed, and with more peaceful thoughts have dined on an humble allowance in their inn ; but as no excuse could be admitted, they were obliged to submit to the governor's pleasure.

The steward withdrawn, and they left alone, they began thus to reason one with another. One said, "Simeon's release looks well upon the governor's side, but I like not this invitation. There is oftentimes the

most malignant design carried on under the mask of friendship.”—“Now we have convinced him that we are no spies,” said another, “I fear he is about devising some other plausible pretence to detain us as slaves in the land.”—“I must confess,” said a third, “that an invitation to such as we, to dine with the second person of the empire, looks very dubious.”—“For my part,” said young Benjamin, “I am under no apprehension of any such thing. I see something in my lord-chancellor, that convinceth me that it is impossible for him to allow himself in unrighteousness. What is your opinion, Simeon? You have had more acquaintance with the Egyptian manners than we have had.”

“Really, my brother,” said Simeon, “I know not what to think of the present invitation, any more than the rest of you. To me it must seem somewhat mysterious, to be brought from a prison to dine in a palace. Yet I assure you, I have met with no ill usage here, further than my confinement. I was bound you saw in your presence; but, as soon as you were departed, I was led away to an apartment agreeable in all respects, except that I was confined to it. I was daily supplied with plenty of excellent food, but from whence it came I was never informed. The governor himself did me the honour of frequent visits, and conversed familiarly with me concerning the Hebrew lineage, (for he appears to be no stranger to Abraham, notwithstanding he is an Egyptian) concerning our father and Benjamin; and, especially, concerning the death of Joseph. And I have observed, that when we have been conversing about these things, sometimes the tears would steal involuntarily from his eyes. I cannot say I have any apprehension of evil now you have fulfilled your engagements.”

As they were thus reasoning among themselves, Joseph came home, and ordered them into the hall of his palace. The steward, at their request, presented

the balm, myrrh, &c. which he received with visible satisfaction, to the great pleasure of his brethren. Then he ordered them all to sit down, and inquired after their welfare.

“Have you been all well, my friends,” said he, “since your departure hence? Did you find your good old father alive and well? Are your wives and children well?”

Judah replied, “We got well home, and found thy servant our father in as good health as his advanced age would permit, likewise our wives and children we found well. But we have cause to fear for our father at our return; for it cut him to the heart to part with his youngest son.”

“And this is your youngest brother of whom ye spake!” said he. “God be gracious to thee, my son. I hope thy father will have no cause to be sorrowful for sending thee hither.”

He said, but his swollen heart could bear no more. He knew not how to keep from his brother's embrace. Therefore he hasted from the hall, before his brethren could perceive his disorder, and sought a private apartment, where he might give vent to the overflowings of his heart. But that he would prove them, whether they retained the same malignant disposition towards Benjamin that they had done towards him, he would have rushed to their embrace, and bedewed them with fraternal tears. But, as before, his wisdom superseded his passion; and he concealed his affection for them till he could be satisfied of their temper towards Benjamin.

Having eased his almost bursting bosom, by the briny flood he shed, he washed off the tears from his face, went in to dinner with the sons of his father, who all sat at table with him according to seniority, from Reuben down to Benjamin. Thus seated, Joseph sent messes from before him unto them all, beginning at

Benjamin, and leaving off at Levi, of whose repentance he had had no particular proof. But little Benjamin's mess was a five-fold portion, designed to inform him, that he had found a friend in the governor of Egypt. So they eat and drank till they were merry in his presence.

But Joseph, in order to prove their regard for his brother Benjamin, contrived to have him arrested as an offender, to see what an effect it would have upon them. Accordingly, he commanded his steward, saying, "I have not yet done with these men; I must get you to assist me in a scheme which I have devised to put them to a more close trial than before. Go fill their sacks with corn, and put every man's money in the mouth of his sack, and take this silver cup of mine, and put it into that of the youngest along with his corn money. But do it yourself; let none be privy to it but you and I."

They had not been long departed, before the steward was commanded to take a troop of light horse and pursue them, charge them with the theft, and bring them back unto the governor. Great was their surprise when they looked behind them, and saw a company of armed men closely pursuing them. They stopped their cattle, and stood still to enquire the cause. "Is this," said the steward, "the manner in which ye foreigners requite the kindness of my lord? Could not you partake of his hospitality without stealing away his plate? You are possessed of my lord's cup, the silver cup out of which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth. This is basely done to requite his goodness to you with such evil."

"I am amazed," said Judah, "to hear such a charge from the mouth of my lord. God forbid that any of the sons of Israel should be guilty of such baseness. Consider, sir, how unlikely it is that we should be guilty of stealing your lord's cup. When

our money was returned in our sacks unknown to us, we brought it back from the land of Canaan. Had we been dishonestly inclined, why kept we it not to ourselves? How then should we go to steal from thy master either silver or gold? But you are welcome to search and satisfy yourself; and if it be found with us, he with whom it is found shall die, and the rest of us will be content to become bondmen to your master."

"Be it so," replied the steward; "he with whom the cup is found shall be detained a bondman to my master, but all the rest may proceed on their journey." They hasted and unladed their cattle; and the steward began to search, beginning at the sacks of the eldest till he came to Benjamin's sack; out of which, to their utter confusion, he took his master's silver cup; in the presence of them all held it up, and said, "Are you now wrongfully charged?" In utter despair they rent their clothes, laded their cattle, and returned to the city; for they would not go forward without their brother Benjamin.

Joseph was still in the hall, waiting their return, and had collected all the sternness he was master of into his countenance. "What is this," said he, "that ye have done? Did you suppose that I could not find out your treachery? Is it right in you thus to requite my kindness?"

They all fell prostrate before him, with their faces to the earth; and Judah with humble submission thus addressed him:—"Alas! my lord, it will be in vain for us to protest our innocence, seeing the cup was found in our possession: though the God of governors will not charge us with putting it there. It is not for this, but old iniquity, for which thy servants suffer. It is not thy hand, but that of our God that is upon us. We confess his judgments to be just. We submit to his sentence, and yield ourselves bondmen in a strange land. Take us, my lord, and dispose of

us as you please. Farewell, aged and honourable Israel! may Abraham's God be thy divine support; for thou seest thy sons no more for ever. Joseph is not; Benjamin is convicted of felony, and all thy sons are determined not to survive his fate. He shall not bear the guilt of his brethren alone. Farewell, beloved wives and tender prattling infants! no more ye fly to the glowing embraces of your husbands and parents. Injured Joseph! never did the blood of Abel cry louder for vengeance than thine doth! Er and Onan are both already fallen victims to avenge thee; and now all the race of Jacob are required! Innocent Benjamin! why should he suffer with his guilty brethren?" So saying, his voice was stopped by his rising sorrow, and he poured forth a copious flood of repentant tears, and then proceeded: "Keep us not in suspense, my lord. Let us know our doom; for we are prepared to meet the worst."

"God forbid that I should do injustice to you," said Joseph, "in either putting you to death, or keeping you all for bondmen. Only he with whom the cup was found shall be liable to punishment. And as for the rest of you, go ye home to your father in peace; and come and traffic in the land, whenever ye have occasion. There is a law of certain and punctual equity, which ought to be observed by all in power; and that is, on the one hand, not to let the offender pass with impunity; nor, on the other, to punish the innocent, however nearly allied to the guilty. I fear God: his law is my rule; it warrants me to punish delinquency wherever it is found, but forbids me at all to oppress the innocent. You ten are therefore at liberty to go where you will; my business is alone with the offender."

"Alas! my brother Benjamin," said Levi; "is all your prepossession in favour of the governor come to this! How was thy simple and honest heart beguiled!

O my brother, how false was thy dream that made, as thou thought, the governor's friendly embrace thrill with a warming glow throughout thy whole bosom ! O my brother, my brother ! I shall never return to Canaan without thee."

Judah came forward, and thus implored the chancellor's mercy :—"Alas ! my lord : spare the young man, our brother, from bonds, imprisonment, and death. But for the guilt of his brethren, his birth might seem to have promised better prospects. Much might be urged in our brother's defence. He is young, inexperienced, and has seen but little of the world. His conduct has hitherto been unimpeached ; and merciful governors do not usually punish with severity the first fault of any delinquent. It might be urged, that the lad was not present when the sacks were filled ; and there is at least a possibility of the cup being conveyed into his sack without his knowledge. Nevertheless, as appearances are strong against him, we stand not to justify ourselves ; but rely on the clemency of my lord governor. Although the guilt may be charged but upon one, the punishment must of necessity fall upon the whole ; for our fate is involved in his. Allow me to say it, for I now speak for life or death, that mercy is the brightest perfection of Deity, and must therefore be the glory of princes and governors—anger and resentment being passions fitted only for slaves, and narrow contracted selfish spirits. We have here delivered up ourselves to your lordship ; and, I think, it would not be for the honour of Egypt for its governor to destroy a number of men, who are willing to become indebted for their lives to his mercy and favour. You have already relieved us when we otherwise must have perished for want ; be pleased to exercise the same clemency in bestowing a free pardon upon these that are willing to be accounted guilty. What, if the God of our fathers, whose wisdom is

unsearchable, and whose judgments are a great deep, should have suffered your servants to fall into these distressing circumstances, on purpose to furnish my lord with further opportunity of exercising his virtue. It will, indeed, shew a noble disposition in my lord governor, to delight in conferring life and mercy, rather than in taking strict vengeance for injuries sustained by himself.

“Let my lord assure himself, that it is not for our own life and safety that we are thus solicitous. No; life has lost its principal charms, since such a reproach is brought upon the house of Israel. But it is tenderness for a good old father, already bowed down with a series of adverse providences. And the loss of his children will bring down his honourable grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. I know well what I say, my lord. I have felt the wringings of parental anguish on the sudden loss of my own children. I have seen the insupportable sorrow of my father’s spirit upon the loss of his Joseph. And should he be bereaved of Benjamin, in whom his very life is wrapt up, it is easy to see what will follow. Perhaps my lord has an aged father alive. Suppose him, my lord, in the place of our father, and let his hoary hairs be an advocate for an unhappy youth, whose life is in your hand. You have sons, my lord. From your parental tenderness to them, conceive what our father must feel upon the loss of his children. There is something sacred in the name of father: therefore the Most High has chosen it, as one of the endearing names whereby he reveals himself to his people, and whereby he chooseth to be addressed by them. God, your heavenly father, will certainly requite all the kindness which you shall shew to this young man, and unto us in him. I pray, my lord, by all that is tender and endearing in the bonds of nature; by all that is amiable in a member of society, and by the endearing obligations we are all under to

the Father of mercies, that you will spare the boy to be a comfort to his aged parents.

“I became bound to restore him to his father again, and shall not return without him. If he is to die, I offer myself in his stead ; or if the sentence is slavery, it is the same. Death and slavery are alike to me. In saying this, I speak but the sentiments of all my brethren ; for they are all determined to stand or fall with Benjamin.”

So saying, he cast himself at the governor's feet, and all the rest after him, in joint mediation for their unhappy brother : all seemingly to no purpose.

Benjamin, with an amiable serenity, and with a glow of brotherly affection, said, “My brethren, if the governor's heart is a stranger to pity, I fear not what he can inflict. It is but to die, and he himself cannot escape it. But live ye, my brethren : for Israel's sake accept the life that is offered you. It will be some satisfaction for our good father to hear, that his Benjamin is innocent of the crime for which he suffers. Let me repeat my request, my brethren ; for I fear not death.”

With the greatest difficulty Joseph suppressed the gust of tender affection ready to burst forth, so far as to be able with some degree of austerity to command the guard to secure the prisoner.

Simeon and Levi sprung from their places, drew their well-tried swords, rushed between the guards and their brother, and with all the vehemence of passion cried out, “If Benjamin dies, he dies neither alone, nor unrevenged. These swords have been bathed in the blood of hundreds ; and hundreds yet shall perish, ere Benjamin dies an unmerited death. The children of Ham shed not Hebrew blood at free cost. If we must die, let us sell our lives as dear as possible.”

“Stay your hands upon both sides,” cried Joseph ; “it is enough. Let all depart the hall except the

eleven brethren," said he; and all departed. Left alone with his brethren, Joseph said, "I have tried and proved your virtue, my brethren, and rejoice to see it. I am Joseph! your own brother Joseph!" He said, and burst into tears as he fell upon Benjamin's bosom, and wept aloud, that even the Egyptians heard him. His brethren stood in the utmost amazement, and confusion glowed upon every countenance. The sight of their injured brother realized all the horrors of their guilt. They durst not approach him, however much they rejoiced at seeing him alive.

He went to them one by one, and embraced them with ardent affection; and, in particular, he assured Simeon and Levi that their generous valour, in defence of his brother Benjamin, had effectually obliterated the last remains of his resentment of their former conduct towards him.

When passion had subsided on both sides, and cooler reason had resumed her government, all being seated in the hall of the palace, Joseph thus harangued them:

"My dear brethren, it is impossible for me to describe the pleasure you have this day given me, by your firm and zealous attachment to Benjamin, your brother and mine. It was not without some ground, as you know, that I had suspicion of your regard to the descendants of Rachel. To be satisfied in this, I devised the scheme by which your virtue has so eminently discovered itself. Reuben, you deserve my warmest acknowledgement for the service you intended me at Dothan; but it had been worse for us all to-day, if your well-meant scheme had succeeded. Whilst I was in the pit I had a vision of an heavenly messenger, that informed me of the mind and will of God concerning me, and perfectly reconciled me to my fate. Methinks the countenances of Simeon and Levi are not free from cloudy apprehensions. O my brethren,

dismiss your fears. I should be worse than an infidel, if your generous attachment to Benjamin did not wholly rivet you in my esteem. Yes, my brethren, I will ever confide in the noble resolution of Simeon and Levi. I have seen so much of the hand of my God in my personal affairs, that I have really lost sight of second causes ; or I love them with the greater tenderness, knowing that there must be poignant remorse follow after evil meanings. Your meaning was then evil, I acknowledge, but the design of God was good ; and I should be exceedingly culpable before God, if I did not heartily approve of the means by which he has exalted me.

“ I assure you, my brethren, that all past injuries are with me as if they had never been ; and I rejoice to see the spirit of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, diffuse itself throughout all his seed. Here, in this cup of cordial friendship, let us drink an eternal oblivion of past injuries. And now, my brethren, you see what God hath done ; but, perhaps, as yet you know not the cause of it. I am here advanced to power and dignity in Egypt ; not for my own sake, but for yours, and that of my father’s house, to preserve much people alive. Two years of the famine are already past. Last year the Nile did not arise to its usual height by eight cubits ; and, this present year, not by twelve cubits. Five years are yet to come, in which there shall be neither earing nor harvest. As this is the case, it may reconcile you to what cannot be recalled, or remedied ; and you may see that God over-ruled your little prejudices for Israel’s good. After you have regaled yourselves with me a day or two, I would have you return to Jacob, my father ; and tell him of all things that God hath done for me in the land of Egypt. How that he hath made me as a father to Pharaoh, and lord over all the land. Tell him, that I invite the whole house of Israel down to Egypt, to

sojourn till the famine is over and gone. And lo, I send light carriages by you to carry my father, your wives, and little ones, and bring them down to me."

By this time it was known in Joseph's palace, that his brethren were come; it got wind in the streets, and flew like lightning from one street to another, till it had spread itself all over the metropolis. The inhabitants in general were in a rapture of joy; and, to testify their regard to the lord high chancellor, there were bonfires made in every opening, bells ringing, waterworks playing, and every other demonstration of joy that those ancient times admitted of. And even Pharaoh himself rejoiced, to hear of the brethren of his favourite being arrived in Memphis.

Now Joseph commanded Manasseh and Ephraim to be brought before him, and presented them to their eleven uncles; and the fair Asenath greatly rejoiced in having found such a number of heroic brethren. Pharaoh commanded Joseph to send suitable provisions and carriages for Jacob and his children, and from the monarch himself, to invite him to come to Egypt, and assure him of protection and provision all the time the famine should last. This the considerate monarch did, to prevent any envious mind from reflecting on Joseph, for any kindness shewn to the household of Israel.

Having regaled themselves two days with Joseph, and seen every thing curious and valuable in the metropolis, he sent them away, after he had given them friendly advice.

After supper, the evening before they began their journey, Joseph thus addressed them: "My dear brethren, you are now going to visit the best and most honourable of fathers, to bring him the unexpected news of having found his son, who has been so long lost. You will be prudent enough, I hope, to take care how you divulge the matter to him; lest the news

of my life should prove as fatal to him, as the former news of my death had likely to have done. Let it be done with caution, and by little and little. In all probability you will find yourselves under a necessity of disclosing the whole of the former plot against me, in order to account for my being yet alive. But, my brethren, beware of reflecting upon each other's conduct: remember that the hand of God was in it. I sympathize with you, my brother Judah, under the heavy loss of my youthful nephews. But I foresee that Judah shall yet be great, in the house of his father, and they shall descend from Judah, who are destined to rule. Let all thoughts of past things be for ever banished from your minds, and cultivate amongst yourselves the strictest amity and friendship. Whilst you stand by one another, as you all nobly did the other day by my brother Benjamin, no power on earth shall overcome you; but if ye should disagree among yourselves, ye would become an easy prey to every enemy.

“Ye depart to-morrow. But let me not send you empty away. You will be pleased to accept of this, as a small token of my regard to the children of my father.” So saying, he presented each of them with a goodly sum of money and changes of raiment, but Benjamin's present was three times as valuable as any of the rest: he likewise sent ten beasts of burden, laden with the best things of Egypt, as a present to his honourable father; and other ten, laden with healthful and delicate provision for them all by the way. Then he blessed them, took his leave of them, and retired to communicate the whole adventure to Asenath, his beloved consort.

BOOK VIII.

The sons of Jacob arrive at Canaan.—Judah relates the governor's kindness.—Jacob expresseth his thankfulness.—Simeon confesseth their former treachery to Joseph.—Judah informs the patriarch of his being alive.—Jacob faints, but is recovered by the sight of the waggons.—Jacob hesitates about accepting Joseph's invitation.—He is encouraged by a vision.—They set out for Egypt.—He meets with Joseph at Heropolis.—Their exceeding joy and endearing caresses.—Joseph presents five of his brethren to the king.—Jacob presented to the king.—Relates Abraham's victory over the four kings.—The famine ended, Joseph restores the Egyptians to their estates.—Sabrina on her death-bed requests a visit from Joseph, that she might implore his forgiveness.—He meets unexpectedly with Alvah in distress, and requites his former kindness to himself.

THE venerable patriarch, impatient for his sons' return, and solicitous for Benjamin's welfare, stood upon an eminence near his rural dwelling, with his sanguine eye intently fixed upon the way of Egypt; when he beheld his sons afar off, and as fast as feeble age would admit, he hastened to embrace them. Have my sons, said he in his heart, found favour with the governor of Egypt, that they are safely and timely arrived? Blessed be the God of my fathers, who so graciously has returned you all, my sons, to my longing embrace. And, blessed be the man, the lord of the land, who dealt friendly with tender Benjamin. Thus the good old man vented the gratitude of his heart, whilst his sons drew near and unladed their cattle. Very prudently had they left the carriages behind at a distance, under proper conductors, that their father's surprise might be the less, until they had gently insinuated the rapturous news into his aged ear. Every thing arrived—cattle, servants, and stores, disposed of properly till a fit opportunity, the sons presented themselves before their

venerable parent, to join him in offering up an evening oblation to that God, who had led them forth in peace, and brought them home in safety ; for, in the days of yore, the pious race delighted to acknowledge God for every benefit. The solemn service devoutly attended to, whilst gratitude and humble adorations ascended with the smoke of the incense, the patriarch assembled all his family, sons, daughters, and grandchildren, and with an excess of parental fondness, embraced them all again, and inquired after what had befallen them since their departure for Egypt. "Come Judah," said he, "you became surety for your brother Benjamin ; tell me, my son, by what means you have been enabled to fulfil your engagement ?"

"My father," replied Judah, "it is with pleasure I can inform you, that we had a safe and pleasant journey down to Egypt ; and as soon as we arrived there, we were conducted to the presence of the governor, whom we found to be a sensible and humane person, capable of feeling the distresses of his fellow creatures. As soon as he had, by proper inquiry, found that we had fulfilled our agreement with him, he forthwith ordered our brother Simeon to be released and delivered unto us. He asked, with a great deal of affection, after our welfare in our absence ; in particular for our aged father, our wives and tender offspring : in short, he seemed to interest himself in our concerns, as much as if he had been our brother. You cannot think, my father, with what delight he gazed upon, and with what affection he embraced our brother Benjamin. He not only returned our money for our corn, but has been pleased to bestow a sum and suit of apparel upon each of us, and unto Benjamin he hath given three hundred pieces of silver, and five suits of rich apparel, besides a very rich and valuable present which he has sent for you, my father, and which shall be laid before you to-morrow morning."

“Blessed be the Lord God,” said Jacob, “who gave you such favour in the sight of the man. And, O! may all his kindness to you, my sons, and to your father’s house, be returned tenfold unto him by the mighty God of Jacob. How causeless were my fears for you, my Benjamin! How did my heart tremble to think, that peradventure evil might befall you! and I concluded, my son, that I could not survive the loss of you. But you know, my sons, that my loss of Joseph might reasonably make me more fearful than otherwise I might have been. I loved him for his mother’s sake, I saw abundance of excellencies in his opening genius, and I thought I could see a spirit of prophecy in the dreams he related to us. Yet, after all these things, Joseph was torn to pieces.”

“No, my father,” replied Simeon, “Joseph was not torn to pieces. It shall be my part now, to reveal a mystery of iniquity, which venerable Israel never could suspect his sons to have been guilty of. His dreams, my father, fired the hearts of his brethren with jealousy; and, foreseeing that if he lived in Canaan, we should become subject to him, we conspired against him to slay him. This was indeed our first purpose; for I have now such a sense of the evil of our proceedings, that I will not attempt to extenuate them. Reuben alone opposed the horrid deed, and thereby exposed himself to danger. Our purpose, however, was over-ruled, and instead of putting him to death, we sold him to some Midianitish merchants. The coat dipt in blood was a contrivance of ours, to hide ourselves from a suspicion of guilt. Oh! sir, accuse not your sons; for it has cost us dear. Our guilt has produced the keenest remorse, and we cannot bear the frowns of an injured father.” — “But Joseph is not, Simeon,” said the patriarch; “I am bereaved of my Joseph; and what restitution can you make? Though not torn in pieces, as I supposed, he

may be enslaved in some foreign country, where I shall never embrace him.”—“No, sir,” replied Judah, “he is not enslaved; we have seen him, we have embraced him, and have conversed with him. He it is that is lord over all the Egyptian monarchy.”—“Oh! what do ye tell me?” replied the patriarch, and sunk down in his chair. A little come to himself, he said, “Does Joseph live? Can it be possible? If he lives, O that these withered arms could grasp him.”—“Yes, my father,” returned Benjamin, “he lives. Joseph, my brother, lives! I embraced him. He wept upon my neck, and I on his; and he sends you an invitation by me, to come and sojourn with him in Egypt till the famine is gone; which he assures us, will be five times twelve months.”

“O Benjamin, what do ye say? are you assured that you now speak the truth? I saw his many-coloured coat torn in pieces, and smeared with his blood. How then can he yet live?”—“Remember, my father,” said Benjamin, “what Simeon has just now declared; that they killed a young goat, and dipped the coat in the blood thereof, rent it, and delivered it to you, my father. So that Joseph lives, and is lord-governor of all the kingdom of Egypt. He hath, besides, sent waggons and other light carriages, my father, to convey you and yours down into the land of Egypt; for he tells us, that there are yet five years more of the famine to come, in which there shall be neither earing nor reaping.”

“That he lives I am thankful for,” replied the patriarch; “as to his grandeur it affects me not. But Joseph lives: that is enough. I will spend the small remains of life in taking a journey to embrace my son before I die. My Joseph, how have I wept over thy death, my son! But O, my God! let me but embrace him, and I soon shall forget all the sorrow sustained upon his account. Yes, Joseph, I come to see thee,

my son. Israel comes to bow himself down upon the neck of him who was separated from his brethren. Make ready, my sons, for our speedy departure. The lamp of nature is already, with me, reeling in the socket. What I do must be quickly done, lest death prevent me.

“But O, my sons! for your sakes, and the sake of my grand-children, I dread to embrace my Joseph's invitation.”—“What objections, sir, can you have to it? There is plenty in all the land of Egypt. There is corn, wine, and oil, treasured up by Joseph's provident care,” said Reuben. “It is that very plenty I dread, my son. And that I fear may be as injurious to your morals as the famine might have been to your families. What, if the abundance of corn and flesh reported to be there, should incline my seed to settle in that strange land, and do what they can to frustrate the Lord's design of putting you and your children in the land of Canaan. I fear for you, my children. Ye are young, and can relish the pleasures of sense. Was I to go alone and visit my son, the danger might be less; as I am old, and the pleasure of enjoyment is departed from me.” Jacob, however, could not resist the importunity of his sons, especially Benjamin, who pleaded hard that he might go and spend his days near his brother Joseph. “Well, my children, I go,” said he, “but I adjure you by the greatest of names, that ye entertain no thoughts of settling in Egypt, nor of mixing yourselves with the children of Ham.”

So early next morning he arose, he and his sons, and his son's wives and children, and departed from the neighbourhood of Salem, having first offered a morning sacrifice upon the altar El-elohe-Israel, and that day reached the well of the oath, where he pitched his tent, and rested that night in the grove which Abraham planted, and where he was accustomed to offer up his devotions, morning and evening, to the

Lord his God. Here also the journeying patriarch, with his family, offered sacrifices unto and invoked the unutterable name of Jacob's God. And lo! in the second watch of the night, the tent of Israel was irradiate with celestial brightness, far surpassing the sun in his strength, and a voice not foreign to Jacob's ear was heard to cry aloud, "Jacob, Jacob." The raptured parent of the chosen race, replied—"Here am I. Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

The voice replied, "Fear not, Jacob; for I am thy God, the God of thy fathers Abraham and Isaac. I have seen all thy solicitude for thy children's welfare, and approve thy pious regard for the promise of thy God. But know, O Jacob, that it was thy God who separated Joseph from thine embrace, to make him a nursing father to the house of Israel. I have given him glory, wealth, and power, in the land of Egypt for thy sake, Jacob; that by his means, I may save the people of my covenant. Fear not, therefore, to carry thy seed down unto that land of plenty. Even there shalt thou meet with thy God, O Israel; for I will go down with thee, and for thy sake will visit Egypt. There will I greatly multiply thy seed, and fulfil all that I spake unto Abraham concerning them. When I have made of thee a great nation, I will bring thy seed forth with wonders and signs in the heavens above, and in the earth below: yea, with a mighty and stretched out arm will I save thy seed, Jacob. As for thee, thou shalt die in a good old age, in a strange land, and thy exiled son shall bedew thy bed with tears of filial sorrow, and close thine eyes in death. Accept, therefore, of Joseph's invitation, and go into Egypt, confident of the presence and protection of the God of thy fathers." Thus said, the vision departed. In the morning Jacob arose, took his sons and daughters and their little ones, their cattle and all the goods which they had procured in the land of

Canaan, and journeyed towards Egypt. Greatly invigorated by the late vision, the patriarch proceeded cheerfully on his journey, till got about half way between Shechem and Memphis, when he dispatched Judah and Naphtali to court, to inform Joseph of his father's approach : and he, on his part, immediately set out with a numerous train of obedient servants to meet him, and the better to expedite the journey of the Hebrew caravan. They met at the city Heropolis, where Joseph was well known, and regarded as the saviour of Egypt. Both father and son had endeavoured, upon their journey, to fortify their hearts for the expected interview. Yet do what they would, they could not restrain nature from breaking through all the injunctions of reason. Joseph with lowly reverence advanced, fell down at his father's feet, and would have asked his blessing ; but as his soul had not power to give action to his lips, Jacob would have raised up his son ; but being overcome with rapturous joy, he sunk down beside him with his head upon Joseph's, and thus for a season father and son both continued speechless, to the great fear and surprise of all the kindred company, lest such a tide of joy, bursting in upon their hearts, should throw the wheels of nature off from the axis, and prove fatal to their desirable lives. At length each labouring heart vented itself in a flood of tears, which the father shed upon the son, and the son upon the father. When the use of speech was regained, nothing was to be heard, but O my son ! O my father ! my son ! my father ! till the tide of passion began to abate. Then both hearts were lifted up with grateful acknowledgments of the goodness of God's holy providence, that had blest them with a once unexpected interview. Loosed from his father's embrace, he flies to the arms of his brother's wives, and O what endearing caresses were there betwixt him and them ? O my Joseph ! my Shuah !

my Joseph ! my Tamar ! my Joseph ! my Zillah ! &c &c. was all the cry. And thus they would have gone on in exchanging endearing caresses till the sun had gone down, if Judah had not put them in mind of the expediency of proceeding on their journey.

It was agreed that Jacob and his company should come on by easy marches, as their strength and the nature of their charge would best admit of ; and that Joseph and some of his brethren should go forward to Memphis, and inform his majesty of the patriarch's arrival. Accordingly, he chose five of his brethren, and departed ; and, as soon as they arrived, he presented them to the king, who rejoiced exceedingly at their arrival. "If Egypt," said he, "has been such a gainer by having only one of the Hebrew lineage, what vast advantages must accrue to the land by having all the family of Israel in its possession !—What are your several occupations, my friends ?" said his majesty. Joseph replied for his brethren : "May it please your majesty, my brethren are all shepherds. From their youth up, their whole business has been about cattle." Joseph chose to answer for them, partly, that by his answer he might pave a way for their dwelling in Goshen, all together with their father, separated from the Egyptians ; and partly, to prevent Pharaoh from conferring upon them honours of state, or employing them in matters of government, to the dissatisfaction of the Egyptians.

"Then, Joseph," said the king, "if your brethren are shepherds, I would have you fix them in a place where they are most likely to find pastures for their flocks. What think you of Goshen, Joseph ?"—"Above all places, if it is your majesty's pleasure, I would choose Goshen for their residence."—"Very well," said the king ; "let them dwell in Goshen ; and you shall have letters, under my sign manual, as your authority for so doing."

When Jacob and his family arrived at Memphis, they were sent to Goshen, where the good old prince Potipherah waited their arrival, and had provided suitable accommodations for them in the city of Heliopolis. Jacob went into Joseph's palace, and was most affectionately received by the princess Asenath who humbly begged the patriarchal blessing on her knees. Manasseh, and Ephraim likewise, came and caressed their venerable grandfather, who pressed them to his glowing bosom.

Refreshment and balmy rest having a little reanimated his feeble frame, Joseph took his venerable father, and presented him to the king, who was struck with solemn awe at the majesty of the patriarch's person. He continued speechless for a time, till Jacob himself broke silence in the following speech: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that has raised up Pharaoh to be at this day a nursing father to many nations. And blessed be Pharaoh of the Lord my God, who has shewn regard to my banished Joseph, and unto the seed of Israel for Joseph's sake. May thy reign be long and prosperous, and heaven-inspired peace be the possessor of thy royal breast. And may that God, by whom thou now reignest, bestow upon thee a crown of righteousness in the eternal skies, when thou art called to leave this uncertain diadem to thy next successor."—"For Joseph's sake," replied the king, "I embrace his father, and bid him welcome at the court of Memphis. But I pray thee, reverend old man, may I be so free as to ask thine age? I remember not that my eyes were ever struck with such a venerable form?"

The patriarch replied, "But few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage; I am now in the hundred and thirtieth year of my age; but the many sorrows interwoven in my lot, and the cross

providences under which I have grieved, have drawn old age upon me before the time."

The astonished monarch replied: "What! do you not account an hundred and thirty years an old age? We should think it a very extraordinary thing to see a person live so long in Egypt."

"O king!" answered Jacob, "to some it may appear an old age; but, unto me, whose ancestors, father and grandfather, lived beyond an hundred and seventy years, it appears otherwise. Abraham, my grandfather, lived to the age of an hundred and seventy-five; and Isaac, my own father, to an hundred and eighty-five; so that I have not attained to the lives of my fathers."

"Abraham!" said the king with some surprise, "we have a tradition concerning one Abraham, a private man, who overthrew the united strength of several kings. Are you a descendant of his? If so, I should be glad to have an account of the truth of this affair. As I have always considered it almost past belief, I have given but little credit to it."

"It is no fiction, my lord," returned the patriarch; "the case was this:—In the days of Amraphel, king of Assyria, he, with other princes in alliance with him, made war with Bera, king of Sodom, and the princes in alliance with him; four kings joined their forces together, and met the five kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, &c. in the vale of Siddim, where they routed the army of the Sodomites, and made such a slaughter amongst them, that they, finding themselves unable to make head against the enemy, were obliged to sue for peace; which could not be obtained but upon condition of becoming tributary to the conquerors. This they were obliged to submit to, however reluctant. Twelve years they paid the stipulated sum; and, in the thirteenth year, supposing themselves in a condition to resist, they refused to pay it any longer. Wherefore

the confederate Assyrians came again under arms, and ravaged all the countries in friendship with Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. The Rephaims, Zuzims, Emims, Horites, Amalekites, and Amorites, felt the severity of their rage. At last, the kings of Sodom having levied a numerous army went forth against them, and joined battle in the valley of Brimstone Pits. But, as before, the effeminate inhabitants of Sodom, &c. could not stand before the warlike Assyrians. Many of them fell in the action, and the rest were totally routed; Sodom plundered and sacked; and Lot, Abraham's nephew, was carried away captive. As soon as my grandfather heard of his kinsman's captivity, resolving upon his redemption, he armed three hundred and eighteen valiant young men, born in his own house, and pursued them unto Dan, where he found them, in a careless and insecure manner, rioting upon the spoils of their late conquest. Sable night, enveloping the land in darkness, greatly favoured his design; he divided his little army into three companies, two of which were ordered to fetch a compass round, and attack the camp at different places, whilst Abraham attacked it on the side next unto him. No sooner had consternation spread itself among the Assyrians, than Lot heard and knew the voice of the Hebrews. They set all the prisoners at liberty, and clothed them with the armour of the slaughtered Assyrians; when, joining with Abraham's Hebrews, they dealt destruction throughout the whole camp, and thousands of the enemy bit the ground in death. Those that escaped out of the camp sought for safety in flight, and were pursued as far as Damascus. So effectually did Abraham follow his blow, that he rescued from the spoilers every prisoner, and all the goods of which they had plundered the sacked cities, and utterly destroyed the four depredating tyrants."—"It was always my opinion," said the monarch, "that Joseph

was descended of illustrious ancestors; and your account of Abraham sufficiently confirms it. Your family, my good old friend, has provided a saviour for Egypt in the person of Joseph; and it is the least thing we can do, in return, to take care of his father's house during the scarcity. Go, good old man, and dwell in the land; the best of it is before you. And you, Joseph, know it is the will of your king, that you amply provide for all your family, and appoint their dwelling most agreeable to their own inclinations."

The severity of the famine was now felt in every part of the land, and no provision was to be met with but what was drawn from Joseph's granaries; whereby the king's exchequer became immensely rich. For first, he gathered up all the money in Egypt in exchange for his corn; when money failed, he received their cattle instead thereof; and when their cattle were all become the king's property, they brought their slaves and bondmen, and exchanged them for corn. Then they sold every man his landed estate to procure bread for their mouths; and at last they gave up themselves for bondmen and bondwomen unto Pharaoh, in consideration of being fed with necessary food. Thus the whole land of Egypt, and all that it contained, became Pharaoh's property, and no subject had any thing left which he could call his own.

The seventh year of the famine elapsed, Joseph issued a proclamation, inviting every person to take possession of his alienated estate, to come and receive seed-corn at the king's granaries, wherewithal to sow their fields. Now he returned to every man his horses, camels, and black cattle, and all that the famine occasioned them to part with, except their money; only requiring, that a fifth part of the increase of all their lands should be faithfully delivered up at the royal magazines. But surely never were people more astonished than at this unexpected restitution of their

estates, and restoration of their liberty, after they and all they had were become the sole property of the king. And never was monarch better pleased with the conduct of a minister, than Pharaoh was, to see his people, by Joseph's wisdom and moderation, freed from slavery, in a manner which secured the lasting dignity and affluence of the crown. To the mutual satisfaction of both prince and people, it was established by an act of state into a law, that the people should enjoy their possessions unmolested, and that the fifth part of all increase should be Pharaoh's for ever.

It was now that Sabrina, the wife of Potiphar, was taken sick unto death ; and, as she found herself confirmed in her virtue, she ventured to request a visit of Joseph, that she might have an opportunity to confess her folly to him in the presence of her husband, and implore forgiveness of the injuries he had sustained upon her account.

“ O Joseph !” said she, “ it is less shame to confess a crime than to be guilty of it. I need not repeat the baseness of my former guilt to you, who have been so feelingly sensible. I wanted you now that I might unbosom myself to you, in the presence of my worthy lord, before I die. I admire that virtue which made you resist the temptation I laid for you. It has for some years been the object of my imitation ; and, I think, I have felt something of its sweetness. I can tell you, that, had you complied with my wild and unlawful desires, you would now have been the object of my aversion, Joseph, even as you yourself foretold. But, oh ! the virtue and honour were all yours, and the guilt, shame, and confusion, my own. And can my lord-chancellor indeed forgive the baseness of a woman who then criminally loved him to distraction ? May Sabrina hope that she dies under the friendship of injured Joseph ? that all resentment is departed

from his generous bosom, and that he can freely forgive his most violent persecutor?"

"Madam," replied Joseph, "my mind is a stranger to resentment, and was so from the first: even when I felt most the power of your revenge, you was the object of my warmest pity. I felt it as an evil of affliction, which it was better to submit to, than to an evil of sin. I judged that the omnipresent God would by some means bring good out of it to me, and therefore I cheerfully endured it. It would, madam, be impious in an high degree, did I forget the means by which my God has advanced me to power, and it would be little less than devilish, to retain revenge against the instruments he might see meet to make use of. By your means, madam, I was cast into prison, where I met with the butler and baker; where also I first saw my lovely Asenath. By their means I was made known to Pharaoh, by whose goodness I was raised to power; so that from the great good arising to me from the little inconvenience I suffered through my then misled mistress, I should be worse than an infidel, if I did not from my heart forgive the lady Sabrina. I rejoiced to hear of your virtue returning to its course, and your affections settled upon their proper object, and I now rejoice to see you in this penitent frame of spirit; for whosoever confess and forsake their sins, shall find mercy."

When Joseph returned home, he found a poor man at his gate, soliciting relief of his servants. By his appearance, it seemed, that he had heretofore been blessed with better days, for even the ruin was noble. The servants had each of them contributed liberally, and amongst them had made him up a purse of fifty pieces, and besides recommended him to the consideration of their lord. Joseph's humanity was such, that he never shut his door upon the poor and needy. yet seldom did he relieve, before he had properly

inquired with tenderness into the case. Always observing this rule, to put the suppliant to as little pain as possible.

The stranger being introduced into the governor's presence, he was desired to give some account of the cause of his misfortunes.

"I am by birth," said he, "an Ishmaelite, who traded from the land of Gilead to Egypt. It is some few years since that, having greatly increased my substance, and added to the number of my servants, I ventured to separate myself from the caravan, with which I usually had travelled; supposing I could make greater expedition when alone, than when tied to the rules of the company. But I soon found that he who maketh haste to be rich, shall presently come to poverty: for the very first journey I made with my own household train, I was beset on a fatal night by a band of thievish Arabs, against whom I was not able to make head. All my merchandize was seized, myself and servants taken prisoners, and basely treated whilst I continued with them. On the third night I found an opportunity of making my escape, which I effected, although not without danger. In the night I travelled, being well acquainted with the wilderness, and through the day I lurked in some lonesome thicket, till I got within the borders of Egypt; when I made the best of my way towards the metropolis, expecting to find relief, in those who stood indebted to me for merchandize before then received. But, alas! I found there was such universal insolvency among my chapmen, that I could obtain no relief at their hands. The late famine, my lord, disables many an honest man from paying his just debts. I have been seeking throughout the capital, and all the neighbouring towns, for an amiable young man, an Hebrew, whom I brought down into Egypt, and sold to his lordship the general, near twenty years ago. As I am persuaded, that if he

lives, he fills some high department; could I meet with him, I doubt not but I should find a friend in the time of necessity."

"What is your name, my friend," said the governor; "and what was the name of the young Hebrew?"—"My name," replied he, "is Alvah, and my friend's name was Joseph, the son of Jacob."—"I am Joseph," returned the governor. "You have found your Joseph, your young Hebrew; and I will befriend you, Alvah." He said, and flew to his friend's embrace, saying, "O my Alvah! my friend, I grieve for your distresses, yet I rejoice that it is in the power of my hand to help you. But let me first pay my just debts, by returning the money you forced upon me at our parting, Alvah." Here he ordered seven hundred pieces to be counted down, and said, "I insist upon it, if you love me, my friend, that you will accept of this as principal and interest, without making any words at all about it. And do give me a just state of all the debts owing to you by the Egyptians, and I will be your paymaster, Alvah." Overwhelmed with gratitude, the good old Ishmaelite could not speak a word. He hardly knew whether the whole was not a dream. At last, he gave vent to the swellings of his heart, by shedding a flood of tears: then said, "Blessed be God, I have found you, my son, and you are Joseph still! Riches and grandeur have not divorced virtue from your noble mind."

DEATH A VISITANT.
FRONTISPIECE.



VITAL SPARK OF HEAVENLY FLAME
QUIT & QUIT THIS MORTAL FRAME.

DEATH;

A VISION:

OR, THE

SOLEMN DEPARTURE OF SAINTS AND SINNERS;

UNDER THE SIMILITUDE OF A DREAM.

BY JOHN MACGOWAN.

HEBREWS ii. 15.

And deliver them, who, through fear of *death*, were all their life-time subject to bondage.

REVELATIONS ii. 11.

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second *death*.

P R E F A C E,

BY THE AUTHOR.

THE favourable reception which *Death, a Vision*, has met with by the more pious and thoughtful; and the frequent accounts I have had of its usefulness, especially to the weary and heavy laden Christian, have induced me to endeavour to make it, as much as possible, still more acceptable, and to print it in a larger type, as well as greatly to improve several circumstances therein related.

The subject is of the highest importance; Death casts the die, and unalterably fixes, for ever fixes our existence, either in a state of the purest holiness and consummate felicity, or in the blackest horror, and most aggravated torments, in the howling regions of infamy and despair. It is of universal concern: all are equally interested in it; for "*all must die.*" This point admits of no controversy; nor can any man appeal from the awful decision. We may in other things, perhaps, allowably differ; but here our judgment must be unanimous, whilst we visit the tombs of our ancestors, and daily tread upon dust once inhabited by immortal spirits. *Your fathers, where are they? The prophets, do they live for ever?* Burying-places discover graves of every dimension, from the infant of a span to the swain of tallest stature. The hoary head, though frequently unnoticed, proclaims aloud the swift approach of death to venerable age, ripening for the grave by a series of bodily infirmities. The young in years, the bloom of youth, and strength of manhood, in this unequal war can make no greater resistance than tottering weakness. Almost every day produceth fresh testimony that youth is by no means an insurance from death; nor robust and brawny limbs a security from the grave. The greatest monarch comes down here to a perfect equality with the basest beggar: and the most delicate epicurean ranks only with the menial drudge or scullion in the kitchen. Neither robes of the finest lawn, nor crowns of the purest gold, have power to exempt their wearers from the pains and horrors of a gloomy death-bed, and its inevitable consequences. How awful this consideration "*God hath appointed that all men once shall die!*" Must it not affect the mind to think of entering into an unknown state of existence? A state, of which nothing can in this life be learned but from the word of revelation. And is it not still more awful to see, that notwithstanding the absolute certainty, and the vast importance of death, the far greatest part of mankind pay little or no regard to its dread solemnity? Men in general will be

more curious and exact in their inquiries after even the most trifling commodity they purchase, than about the most suitable preparation for death. If a tradesman is about purchasing any valuable article, how diligent is he to guard against imposition? If a gentleman purchaseth an estate, how inquisitive is he after its real value, and with what accuracy does he examine the validity of his title: notwithstanding he is to hold it, as it were, only by the hour, or rather by the moment.

Strange it is, but it is as true as strange, that the bulk of mankind will take nothing upon trust, except their everlasting concerns. O reader, if thou art one of this thoughtless herd, allow me to tell thee, that thou hast a terrible death-bed, at least a terrible death, before thee, which will overtake thee, and will not spare thee one moment because of thine unpreparedness. No: if thou remainest thoughtless, thou remainest also without excuse; thou hast had, thou still hast, monitors enough. The passing-bell, whose doleful sound daily salutes thine ear, calls thee to remember thy mortality; every newspaper that thou readest, by the accounts of death in it, bids thee look forward to another world; yea, every symptom of disease, summoneth thee to prepare for thy long home. Let no man therefore say, "he had no warning of his mortality," seeing almost every thing in nature, if duly attended to, proclaims it to thee. Yet man, thoughtless man, goes on under a vain shew, and securely pursues earthly objects with as much assiduity as if death had in reality no existence: and as if there was not an awful hereafter consequent upon dissolution.

Give me leave to deal plainly with thee for once, my reader, for God thy judge will one day, and that perhaps very soon, be plain; justly and strictly exact with thee, and with every one; will call thee to a severe account for the thoughtlessness of thy ways; yea, and visit upon thee the sad effects of thine own inconsideration. Tremendous must that audit be which is unthought of, and for which thou art unprovided; like that man without the wedding garment, the sinners shall remain speechless.

Thou pressest hard after the perishing riches of this world, sometimes successfully, but frequently disappointed. And what if thou couldst amass the wealth of the whole nation to thyself, so that all thy mites should increase to talents, alas! what should this profit, if thy soul is yet a stranger to that religion which is the only preparative for a happy dissolution? A bed of state will not deter the approach of rude and uncivil disease, nor will embroidered curtains repel the shaft of Death; the silver canopy over thy face will not inspire thee with one ray of hope to preserve thee from drooping on the prospect of losing thine all. Couldst thou leave as many millions as thou dost pounds to surviving heirs, or to charitable uses, it would not in the least open upon thy heart the pleasing prospect of divine felicity; nor bribe the fangs of hell from seizing thy despairing spirit; would not even purchase thee a more tolerable station in the mansions of the damned, or one moment's

respite from thine unutterable woe. Vain and insignificant wealth can only comfort in health and prosperity, but boasteth not the power of relieving when in the greatest necessity. Yet how many damn themselves by preferring thee, O delusive wealth, to Jesus and his salvation! O God open the eyes of the blind and thoughtless man, that he may be wise to consider his latter end.

Art thou a man of pleasure, and is thine heart in public places or resort? How unworthy then the name of man! How much more excellent are the brutal ranks, which so faithfully answer the several ends of their existence! The very beasts that draw thee to routs and assemblies, and serve to promote thine unmanly dissipation, will bring in their several accusations, and all thine enjoyments will be swift witnesses against thee. Go on in thy life of festivity; let every day be a renewed carnival, and every returning evening produce some new, some more pleasing revel than the former; shut out from thine impious heart all thoughts of God, of religion, and holiness; yet know, whoever thou art, that thou shalt die, and God will bring thee to an account for every moment of time he has allotted thee, and every mercy he has conferred upon thee. If thou livest without God, in time thou shalt also die without him, and be banished from him to eternity.

When disease shall seize thee, and Death presents his envenomed arrow at thy heart, order thou thy couch to be carried to Vauxhall, Corneilly's, the Pantheon, or some other haunt of pleasure, and try if thou canst die with more composure amongst the shouts of madness, and the bursts of foolish laughter. Yea, shroud thee in a mask, and thou shalt see, that Death commissioned shall not miss his aim, but amongst the giddy crowd will select his destined victim, and as soon dispatch thee at the Haymarket or Covent Garden, as if secluded in the lonely desert. Shake off all restraints of decorum, cast the admonitions of reason behind thee, cease from reflection, and become the perfect brute; yet shalt thou find that Death will present objects to thee which shall demand thy attention, and bring thee to thyself again; for thou canst not fly from his quick researches.

But what shall we do, seeing death is inevitable? Do! Shake off the sensual brute, and return to the exercise of reason. Remember that you are endued with intellects capable of reflection; that although you should live brutal lives, you shall not have the privilege of dying like them, but must make your appearance before the eternal God, undergo the scrutiny of infinite holiness, and be judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil. If thou never bowedst thy knee to the God that made thee, do it now, and beg of him to teach thee to act becoming a rational being, accountable to thy Maker for thy procedure. Seek his will in the volume of revelation, so shalt thou be taught that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, and that there is no holiness but what ariseth from a being born again. Therefore ye must be born again. in order to die happy and live for ever blessed.

—Let whoever pleases laugh at the proposition ; their impious sneers will yield to thee no manner of excuse, when God shall demand thy spirit. I therefore take my leave of the thoughtless reader, by leaving this *memento* with him, “ *Remember, O man, that thou must and shalt die.*”

Shall I now beg leave to address you whom God hath made sensible of the necessity of a Saviour, and of the awful importance of an ever-during existence—Great are your privileges ! and great your obligations. From death you have nothing to fear ; come when it will, it must come to you in a friendly manner ; for it shall go well with them that fear the Lord. *Mark*, take particular notice of that man, whose ways are perfect, whose heart is sincere, and earnestly thirsts after, and strives to attain that pleasing conformity to the Divine will from which our first father fell by transgression ; *behold the upright*, who is the same in his family or closet, that you see him in the church assembly. *The end*, the death and death-bed of that man *is peace*, a holy serenity, and calm composure, which neither earth nor hell can disturb. This peace, which accompanies the latter end of the Christian, is the peace of God, by him bestowed, and by him maintained, and centres in the enjoyment of his sacred presence, and is such a peace as never yet filled the bosom of an unconverted sinner, and therefore absolutely beyond the comprehension of unassisted reason. Life may be gloomy whilst in the tabernacle. The way may be rugged and the path uneven, so that the weary pilgrim may come halting to his end ; but that shall crown the work, and the peaceful end shall eradicate every sensation of former pain, so that your troubles shall be remembered only as waters that have passed away , and all before you will be pleasing and delightful. A few days of adversity will give place to an eternity of pleasure ; an eternity of undecaying comfort being for ever behind, and still to be enjoyed. In all your afflictions with which an all-wise God sees meet to exercise you, it will be for your consolation to bear their promised end in view. Even in this life they shall bring forth in you the peaceable fruits of righteousness, whilst they are working out for you, according to the beautiful language of inspiration, “ A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

What a beautiful climax ; what an ascent of blessing is here, springing from a source so unpromising ! That afflictions which burden us whilst in this tabernacle should be called light, may to inexperience appear something strange ; yet light they are in comparison of the weight of judgment due unto sin’s demerit ; light in comparison of the unspeakable sorrows actually sustained by our adorable Lord and Saviour : and light in comparison of that vast weight of glory, which God, our almighty Father, takes occasion by them to work out in our behalf. Nor is it less strange to hear our affliction, which frequently attends us from the cradle to the tomb, represented but as for a moment ; yet, when compared with that perpetual felicity so fast approaching, life, though drawn out to the days of Methuselah, sinks into nothing. Yet even this light affliction,

which is but for a moment, shall work for us a far—more—exceeding—and eternal weight of glory. Here is a *weight* of glory instead of light afflictions—a *great* weight of glory—a *greater* weight of glory—a *far* greater weight of glory; far greater than we can ask or think of, or in any ways deserve—a *far more greater* weight of glory, than could ever have been attained by the most perfect legal obedience—a *far more exceeding greater* weight of glory—and to crown all—a far more exceeding greater *eternal* weight of glory. To set forth the issue of the saint's afflictions, this elegant apostle has exhausted the power of language. Further he could not go; eternity must discover the rest. Let patience then have its perfect work, and let contentment be the object of your pursuit; it is no matter what bitter ingredients are mingled in your cup; it is the prescription of infinite wisdom, and therefore must be salutary.

But death is awful; you know not how to bear the thoughts of dying. Why should the weary have any objection to laying him down to rest; or the hungry beggar to his entering into the banqueting house? Death is indeed a dark and gloomy porch, but it is the gate of thy Father's house; and will not the loving, the longing child, venture through a few moments' gloom in order to get at the dear embrace of a father so loving and compassionate?—You must pass the gate, in order to enter the mansion that so long has waited your arrival: and your Lord, your blessed friend and forerunner, hath taken care to remove out of the way every thing noxious and finally hurtful; he shall vouchsafe his amiable and lovely presence in the mount of straits and valley of thy fears; and shall make thy death perfectly safe and salutary, perhaps even desirable and easy. To the saint of God, for the most part, the bitterness of death is past before death itself arrives, so that upon its arrival he does not find it to be that terrible and tremendous thing to die which he once apprehended. O my God, vouchsafe me thy sensible presence in my last hours; then shall I esteem my death an inestimable benefit, and my last hours the most precious of my temporal life; and even with my dying breath I will magnify the precious name of Jesus my beloved.

Once more, let me recommend it to you, as you wish to live honourably, and to die in comfort, to cultivate those tempers and principles that are likely to have your approbation on a death-bed. I am either greatly mistaken in respect to the nature of Christianity, or some people of eminent rank in the church of Christ must undergo a very great revolution in the temper and disposition of their minds, before they are likely to have a comfortable death: an angry, a revengeful, an implacable temper very ill agrees with the genius of the gospel dispensation, and with our character as followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who, with his dying breath, cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Let this ever be remembered, that it is not a well informed head, and clear knowledge of gospel truth, which can either diffuse peace through the heart, or imprint the image of Jesus upon the soul, if a sanctified heart, if heavenly tempers and dispositions of mind

are wanting. The one may indeed give you the name, but it is the other that gives you the nature, of a Christian. It has been a melancholy observation, in which I am afraid there is but too much justice, that some professors, most eminent for gospel knowledge, are most remarkably deficient in regard to the spirit of Christianity, and think indeed that they ought to behave ill to those who are less clear in their doctrinal sentiments, or have the unhappiness to differ from them in some favourite article. But what an unfavourable idea is this likely to give infidels of even the Gospel itself, as they are glad to lay hold of every blemish in the Christian character, and to charge the blessed Gospel with the defects of its abettors. I freely confess, that if I had not been favoured with some acquaintance with the nature, power, and spirit, of the Gospel myself, what I have seen of the spirit and conduct of professors must unavoidably have fixed on my heart an indelible disgust against revealed religion in general : therefore it is easy to account for the unhappy increase of Deists and Freethinkers, so observable in Britain at this period.—There is such a thing as saying without doing ; as defending the truths of the Gospel in word, and denying them in the spirit of our whole conduct ; ought not then every lover of Gospel truth to look well to his spirit and conversation, lest he should effectually injure that blessed Gospel which he desires to promote, and which alone can yield him peace and composure in his dying moments.

There is no way so likely to soften the tempers, and regulate the passions of man, as to cultivate an acquaintance with death-bed solemnities, and strive to keep an approaching eternity in view. It is only in proportion to this, that we can either think or act becoming the Christian. This habit of mankind, conversant with eternity, has many peculiar advantages connected with it, and is of the greatest utility in the religious life ; such as making afflictions, which otherwise would seem long and severe, to appear, what they really are, but light and momentary ; naturally leads us into such an acquaintance with our own personal weakness, that we can bear with the weaknesses of others, and exercise forbearance even to our greatest enemies ; makes the honour of religion, the peace and tranquillity of the church, and the spread of the Redeemer's glory, the first objects of our pursuit ; in comparison of which all other concerns will seem but light and trivial. Besides, that familiar acquaintance with it, which in the issue shall make death itself desirable and easy ; which is rarely the case with those who are but little given to bear in mind the solemnities of their dissolution. The pilgrim cannot forget his native country, nor the exile the house of his fathers ; how then can it be that the Christian under the exercise of grace shall forget the land of his inheritance ?

The following little tract was written within the immediate views of death, and when eternity made very awful impressions on the heart of the author. The mode of it was chosen with a view to make it more entertaining, whilst it conveyed the necessary instruction to the mind,

The substance of it notwithstanding is taken from facts, which have fallen under his own observation, and it is hoped that, through the Divine blessing, the truths conveyed in it, will produce their evidence in the believing heart. I trust I can say that I am thankful for the accounts I have heard of its usefulness, and bless God that any feeble attempt of mine should be owned to his people's edification. I have taken fresh pains in preparing this edition for the press, and am persuaded that it comes now abroad under greater advantages than in former editions. What alterations I have made are such as seemed to me calculated to promote its usefulness, and make it more agreeable to the serious reader. I have only to add, that I beg my reader to impute the plainness of speech I have used in the Preface, to the warm desire of seeing the true spirit of religion prevail amongst professors, and to be useful to the souls of my fellow sinners.

Now that the Holy Ghost may attend the reading of *Death, a Vision*, with his special influence; that it may answer the end for which it is now again sent into the world is, and I trust shall be, the author's prayer. Amen.

DEATH:

A VISION.

PART I.

The Subject introduced.—The Terrors of Death depicted.—Christ's Victory over his Power.—The Dream commenced.—The Votaries of Pleasure.—The Disappointment attending the Acquisition of Riches.—Ambition the Source of Calamity.—The Caprice of Fortune.—Beautiful Landscape.—Man's Superiority over every Part of the Creation.—Death portrayed.—Death the Effect of Sin.—The most exalted Characters not exempt from his Power.—Consternation at his Approach.—Medicinal Aid insufficient.

It was about twelve months ago that my mind, as is but too frequent with me, void of stability, rambling from one theme to another, and, for a considerable time, continued its vagary to such a degree, that I found myself utterly incapable of fixing my attention on any subject that presented itself, however interesting and important it might seem. At last an awful subject, DEATH—all conquering DEATH! presented itself to me, and that not in a very desirable manner, but in all the deformities of an implacable enemy to nature. This unwelcome, though important visitant, engrossed my attention in such a manner, that for a fortnight's space I maintained an almost constant intercourse with that awful production of sin,—throughout the whole length of day, whether I was in the closet, at the table, or taking a turn on the flowery banks of Severn (my friendly neighbour) I was always employed in viewing the features of his awful countenance; marking, as well as I could, the proportion of his

parts, and duly observing his formidable retinue. It was thus I employed myself, whilst the cheerful sun illumined our horizon, and nature rejoiced in his genial rays: nor was I less intent on the awful subject, when silent night spread her sable curtains over the kingdom, and invited the labourer to refreshing rest: for either my eyes resisted the leaden influence of sleep, or the visiting slumber brought the thoughts of DEATH along with it. One particular instance of my nocturnal conversation with that universal pillager I esteem not unworthy of a public hearing, therefore shall do myself the pleasure of relating it.

It happened, one night, after I had been deeply ruminating through the day, on that awful subject, that when I was in bed I could not compose myself for several hours to rest, but numbered the clock from eleven till two, so deep was the impression which the exercise of the day had left upon my mind. Then it was that I felt the power of an alarmed imagination; for in one strain of thought I fancied I beheld the dreaded monster approaching me with his open commission in one hand, and a resistless dart in the other, with which he intended piercing my reluctant heart; and the hated grave, close at his heels, yawning with eager desire for a prey. The man who knows the extent of his own fortitude, and the prowess of nature's arm, will not brand me with cowardice, though I tell him, that such a striking discovery made my timorous nature shrink, and turn its back on the inflexible enemy:

Hard work, alas! to join the fray with Death,
Unless defended from his baleful sting.

At another time I fancied I saw the tyrant in the form of a dragon, writhing his tremendous bulk beneath the feet of a glorious personage, who bore five overflowing wounds, which he received on the day that haughty DEATH imagined the heavenly country was

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THE CRUCIFIXION.

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added to his earthly dominions. Indeed well might the insatiable tyrant conceive such a presumptuous thought, seeing, strange as it may seem, the Lord, the fountain of life himself, had fallen into his hands; nor did the regardless monster pay the least deference to his immaculate person. But well for man it was, that as the Saviour fell, he seized the king of terrors in his most hideous form, and wrenched from him the fatal sting, the sad repository of all his strength, and disabled him of the least hurtfulness to the chosen race. This holy Conqueror, for reasons known to himself, and profitable to us, was pleased to visit the dwellings of the dead; and, for a season, submitted himself to the arrest of DEATH. But the third blest morning come, he shook the dust from him, burst the barriers of the tomb, forsook the confines of DEATH, and in holy triumph held forth the poisonous sting, and said, *I have overcome Death, and him that had the power of death.* When I was indulged with this mental vision, I thought that emboldened nature collected its force, and advanced to gaze on the expiring monster. Oh! thought I, if I could always view that cruel adversary in his stingless condition, sprawling at the feet of his wonderful Conqueror, I could meet him with as little fear as a child would sport himself with a harmless lamb. But, alas! I often looked forward with fear, and sometimes with horror, to that momentous period that shall fix, for ever fix, my state of existence, in an unalterable station of *weal* or *woe*. To be incapable of discerning any thing alluring in life, any thing attractive in this world, and yet to dread a departure from it; to have no satisfying discovery made of that world of spirits where Emmanuel reigns in triumph, nor of the safety of the passage from earth to heaven, how dismal the case! How gloomy! how threatening the prospect! As I was meditating on these awful subjects, gentle slumber seized me with its lulling

charms, and soon wafted me into the arms of downy sleep, where I lay the rest of the night inactive in body, DEATH having imprinted his image upon me.

In the mean while, the more vigilant mind, after her usual manner, rambled abroad through unmeasured space. Mounted on agile fancy, she soon explored the vast meridian from pole to pole : then, changing her course, she winged her flight across the countries, from the eastern depth to the occidental shore, and in its rapid journey my fruitful fancy lined out a numerous train of visionary objects ; so that now I had work enough cut out for the residue of the night, in turning over these phantoms of the mind.

I dreamed, that in one place I beheld the most beautiful garden that ever I had seen, represented by any type or print whatsoever, and which I presume could be equalled only by Eden in its original beauty. In the midst of this delightful garden arose a fountain, not of water, but of a slimy substance, bearing something of the resemblance of boiling pitch. I thought the fountain flowed apace, and sent forth innumerable streams to every quarter of the globe, in such plenty, that it diffused itself abroad through every corner of the land, insomuch that every inhabitant was less or more bedaubed with the polluting matter. Gentlemen in scarlet and lace, ladies adorned with silver and gold brocades, I beheld smeared with the filth of the fountain : from the high possessor of the royal chair, down to the despised lazar, all were polluted, though many of them perceived not the stain. Many of those streams joining in one, composed a river of prodigious force, which passed through a spacious plain, and multitudes of people of both sexes, high and low, rich and poor, of all denominations and persuasions, young and old, I saw rolling in the filthiness of the stream. Some swimming, others wading ; some faster, others slower, down the noisome channel ; some sipping,

others lapping, the foam of the unnatural billows ; but all going along with the stream, which I perceived disembogued itself on the other side of this world, in a lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, *where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched.*

In another place I saw an infinite number of people, old and young, rich and poor, some decked with ornamental embroideries, rich brocades, delightful damasks, &c. others *hardly* covered with deforming rags ; some with their coaches, landaus, &c. attended with a numerous retinue ; some on horseback following a pack of hounds, others running on foot, but all pursuing the same chace. This promiscuous body, as I thought, formed itself into a circle of a wide diameter, around the mouth of a dreadful volcano. Every member of the mixed multitude held an uninterrupted pursuit around the ring. Those who rode in coaches, chariots, and landaus, went foremost in the mad procession ; those who strode the martial horse were next unto them ; and the poorer sort, who tramped on foot, bided after as fast as they could. When I beheld the ardour of the crowd, I could not help admiring what valuable prize it might be, which prompted them to run with such alacrity, and that even within the view of danger ; till at length I espied what are commonly called the pleasures of the flesh, transformed into immaterial butterflies, a cloud of which cut their uneven flight around the above-named circle, and danced as *wantons* within a very small distance of the first rank of the pursuers ; and many of them, as straggling flies, mixed themselves with the various ranks of the fag-end of the multitude ; and all the crowd, as I thought, were intent on catching the giddy flies, ever hoping and ever disappointed.

Sometimes the pursuers got within arm's length of the leading flies ; then they snatched with eager grasp, nothing doubting but the long-sought prize at last was

won. But, oh, the power of deceit ! as soon as the enthusiast opened his hand, he saw with grief that the fly had eluded his diligence, however often it fluttered near him. Thus disappointed, they doubled their efforts and increased their speed, in order to accomplish the desired end ; but this, notwithstanding all their endeavours, I perceived to be impracticable ; for although the butterflies always kept in view, so subtle were they, they never could be caught ; and yet so alluring was their mazy dance, that the mad pursuers, prompted with hope of attaining, could not be prevailed with to desert the chace, although at every turn one or more of the company fell into the pit from whence there is no redemption. But as the volcano in the centre received those whose race was run, others from the outside joined the ranks, and filled up the place of the persons lost. And thus it was at every turn ; for they were always drawing nearer and nearer to the pit, and thus they continued as long as I beheld them.

In a third place, I saw in a spacious field, a prodigious number of people, mostly old, or middle-aged, extremely busy, and working upon their hands and knees, for whom I was touched with the tenderest emotions of pity, looking upon them to be in a state of the most abject slavery, but could not for a time comprehend the nature of their servitude, being altogether unacquainted with so strange a sort of labour. Their actions seemed much to resemble those of a mole, for their hands and feet, and every other organ, were closely employed ; but their *heads*, their *plodding heads*, were principally concerned in the work, and what before I took to be such a servile drudgery, I soon learned to be their chief, if not their only pleasure. Oh ! with what alacrity did they rout with their heads, mole like, in the earth, in quest of somewhat ; but what it was I could not at first comprehend, till after

lending a close attention for some time to their motions, I perceived them to pick up certain particles of yellow dust, with somewhat of a brilliant gloss; which, as soon as found, they kissed, and hid in a cavern very near the heart. Many of those diligent gentry I saw fall prostrate before the refulgent heap, and thus addressed it: "GOLD! adorable gold! GOLD, thou blessed effect of *mine own industry*, be thou ever preserved safe in my possession, and I desire no other good, no other blessing but thee. Increase, oh, increase upon me! for thou answerest all things, and I can be happy only in the possession of thee. Avaunt every pilfering rogue: ye poor and needy, keep forever at a distance from my dwelling, and reap the reward of your slothfulness. And, O my GOLD! continue to rest in these blessed coffers, blessed only by thy presence. Instead of roving, ever here take up thy abode; for I vow, that my morning homage, and evening adoration, shall be paid to none but thee." I saw, as I thought, some of them rout a whole summer's day, and prove very unsuccessful, finding few or none of those shining particles of dust; others were more successful, and, every time they dived into the earth, brought forth some less, others more, of the fulgent *clay*, and disposed of it so as to endue it with such a generative quality, as annually to beget and bring forth more of its own species. Others I saw, who routed long and sore, but no increase ensuing, they fell into a visible discontent, and cursed the partial earth, which bestowed her favours on others, as they thought, less worthy than themselves. Some there were who toiled long, and were very successful in the *routing* way, having heaped much of that precious dust together; but, to their lasting mortification, some cunning neighbour, by a most masterly artifice, got beyond, and robbed them of the adored metal. Others diligently routed both night and day in the

earth, and with the utmost care disposed of their increase in some place of approved safety ; but, in despite of all their industry and care, they were mortified to the last degree, when they perceived their *own* children, who played about their knees, and whom they loved above all things, *next* to their gold, *had been* more dexterous in scattering the heaps abroad than they themselves in collecting them. Likewise some there were, who, by long and incessant fatigue, had the pleasure of gathering much of this yellow dust together ; but ere they were aware, whilst standing in an adoring posture before it, suddenly sunk into the earth, and I saw them no more ; but where they went to take up their abode, I do not at present determine ; only this I saw, their memory was soon forgotten, and the next heir reaped the fruit of their industry. Others there were who, with indefatigable diligence, had got *almost enough* of this brilliant dust ; but, ere the fool considered that it was perishable, he had the unspeakable grief of seeing it all swept away by some shower, or burned up by some flash of lightning, sent on purpose by the angry heavens ; on which disaster some of them became quite disconsolate, and went mourning even to the grave. Others, of more heroic fortitude, having sustained loss, immediately clapped down on their hands and knees, and went to work with their head in the earth, and routed with double diligence, resolving by all means, just or unjust, to repair their ruined heaps. Having had a full view of this routing brotherhood, I could not forbear thinking that a people, so very near resembling the *mole* in its dispositions and actions, might, with a good deal of propriety, be named HUMAN MOLES.

But, tired with beholding the paltry actions of this grovelling society, I thought I bent my course to another domain, where I saw a lofty tower, the top of which transcended the hoary clouds, for aught I

know, as far as they are higher than the earth, perhaps many times as far. The tower was built in a pyramidical form, divided into great variety of stories, with a kind of winding way on the outside, which led from one story to another; and you must think that a very dangerous way it seemed, seeing it had no battlements to guard its ascendants. On every story were built certain pinnacles, or small towers, beautifully adorned with garlands of flowers, plumes of feathers, titles of state, names of honour, &c. and on the top of the tower was a figure of clay, overlaid with the appearance of gold. This image was formed in the shape of a woman, beautiful at first sight, but whose features appeared grosser the longer you looked at her. She seemed to be crowned with gold, adorned with sparkling diamonds, and a zone, studded with precious stones, begirt her swelling loins; over her head was raised an azure canopy embroidered with the finest gold. In one hand she held titles and names, in the other a regal sceptre; and in an inviting posture she stood on a marble pedestal, with this alluring motto wrote on her escutcheon: *The valiant hero who hath courage enough to climb up to me, shall enjoy me.* Oh, what bustle was here among people of all ranks, striving who should soonest ascend the sides of the tower; each striving to possess himself of some place of eminence, without considering the dangers to which they were exposed by their aspiration. Often have I seen the contention of the turf, but never did I see such jockeying as was here; scarcely any thing but jostling and crossing the way was to be seen amongst them. When one was ascended a few steps above the vulgar level, and fancied himself secure of a place of eminence, another prompted thereto by envy, or some other principle equally vicious, came up to him, tripped up his heels, and precipitated him into the moat which surrounded the tower: for it

ought to be observed, that the tower was surrounded by a horrible puddle, into which many of those who sought to ascend were plunged with violence before they knew themselves to be in danger, either by the jockeying of their opponents, or even when seated upon the long desired pinnacle, by some eddy gust bursting from the bosom of the tower, and precipitating them lower than they had been before. However, some few there were, who, with indefatigable diligence, attained almost the top of the tower, and on the spiral point of the pinnacles they swaggered with waving arms; and in a contemptuous manner, looked on the gazing crowd who stood below, eager beyond measure to obtain a smile of their lordships: herein, however, I thought the crowd was greatly disappointed; for no sooner were any of these gentry put in possession of a pinnacle, but instantly they drank the obli-viating waters of Lethe, and totally forgot the men upon whose shoulders they climbed to those seats of eminence. Nevertheless, so deeply infatuated were those who stood below, that they not only worshipped the grandeur which they themselves had put upon them, but stretched their expectation beyond imagination, of receiving some convincing proof of their gratitude. But former depressions utterly forgot, the unworthy gentlemen dwelt in their secure pomp, till, in an unhappy hour, a ruffling blast burst swiftly upon them, and furiously whirled them from their seats of honour.

Some two or three ascended even to the marble pedestal, where they sat adorned with plumes of feathers, but could hardly be seen of the populace below. One thing concerning them I could not but think remarkable: sometimes they appeared like a lamb, then like a lion or a bear; and if at any time the wind beat high upon them, they transformed themselves into a willow, and bended beneath the blast; other-

wise into a stream, and thus they eluded the iron hand of danger: and when the storm was over, they appeared like themselves again; and the haughty madam looked down upon them with a smile of complacency.

But of all the multitude there was only one who sat immediately at her feet in a royal chair; upon whose head she rested her hand, and owned him her darling son. This favourite was a blooming majestic youth, in whose countenance was to be seen wisdom and magnanimity written in legible characters; and, with deportment altogether different from those who sat near him, he looked down with an air of affection upon all the ranks below him.

But, strange as it may seem, this worthy personage, notwithstanding his merit and elevated station, did not appear to be the most happy man in the world; for it was not difficult to see anxious cares, and perplexing fears, crawling as so many snakes round the seat of majesty. I thought then, that surely the higher a man is in station, he is the more emphatically wretched, unless he can hug the servile chain like the mutable sons of Proteus, or has learned to live above the caprice of fortune. I thought in my dream, that by what means soever any pinnacle threw its rider, or however dirty his fall might be, that no sooner was the place proclaimed empty, than numbers strove who should first vault into it. Here I saw a curate aiming at a vicarage, a vicar at a bishopric, and a bishop striving for an archiepiscopal see. Here I saw a valet aspiring to the fine gentleman, a baronet aiming at an earldom, and a country squire coveting the direction of the nation. Here I also saw a private sentinel aiming at a halbert, a halberdeer at a captain's place, a captain earnestly suing for a regiment, and *Prude*, my lady's woman, affecting the name of *madam*.—For my own part, when I saw the follies of mankind, I

could not help wishing that they were again blessed with the right use of their reason.

At last, more staid, I found myself in the middle of a spacious field, decorated with all the variety of nature, in bloom; the fresh verdancy was the velvet-like ground-work, embroidered with a richer variety of perfect colours than ever the delicate pencil of Apelles left on the stained canvass. I walked along, admiring its beauties, ravished with the fragrancy of the full-blown flowers, which, as oriental gems, richly decorated the enamelled plain. Here I beheld the glory of the Divine Creator, sparkling in every verdant pile which decked the spreading lawn, in such a manner, that seeing could not satisfy the eye. Nor was my ravished ear less delighted with the tuneful voice of the early lark, as ascending she sung morning anthems to her Almighty Preserver. Like masters of music, equally fired with a sense of gratitude, the blackbird and thrush, emulous of song, poured their flowing harmony abroad through the vault of ether, as if scorning to be out-done in praise to their common parent. Pleased to see the spangled field join in concert with the feathered songsters, who sent forth their chirping melody from the flowery hedges; the one cheerfully singing, the other sweetly smiling, the great Creator's praise: "O man," said I, "lord of this lower creation, what blessings dost thou enjoy beyond the most extensive privileges of all thy neighbours, the inhabitants of air, earth, and water! Conscience, reason, and understanding, an erect posture of body, sole dominion over all the numberless ranks of creatures, animate and inanimate, which possess this earthly globe; they are all thine by Divine donation; they all were made for thine enjoyment; such are thine invaluable privileges, joined with an ever-during existence, and a capacity fitted for the possessing of an INFINITE GOOD!

“These are the blessings peculiar to the state of favoured man, and for which only depraved man is capable of being unthankful. But, oh ! let humanity blush at the awful consideration ; notwithstanding all our enjoyments, we, only we men, are idle, when universal nature joins in general concert to speak the great Creator’s praise. Ungrateful man ! shall the sun, the moon, and stars, with all the hosts of heaven unceasing move in general concord, and harmoniously shew forth the praises of God ? Must the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and all the inhabitants of the waters, be concerned in the enhancement of His manifest glories, and thou, above all others, most beloved, and most indulged, alone remain dumb in the general concert ; worse than dumb, even refractory ? The horse, that now glories to prance under thy weight ; the vine which bleeds to satiate thine intemperance ; the people of the feathered nations, whose little carcases must now indulge thy gluttony, will one day severally appear as the swiftest witnesses against thee. Thou ungrateful abuser of many blessings ! what will become of thee when thy soul is demanded ? How wilt thou stand before an infinitely holy God ?— Dreadful thine account ; for God is just, as well as beneficent ?”

I thought in my dream, that as I was thus ruminating, I was greatly surprised, by seeing the monster DEATH enter the field, through a breach which Sin had made in its fences. He appeared at first in form of a skeleton, with quiver and darts, as he is usually drawn. The most barbarous rage, and inflexible cruelty, sat brooding over his hollow eyes, whilst his unseemly fingers grasped the irresistible scythe ; the mattock and spade, wrought in a field of corruption, with the resemblance of empty shades frisking over it, was the skeleton’s flag. Close behind him, almost treading on his heels, followed a lean ill-looking figure, with

extended jaws ; at the sight of which my blood chilled in my veins, and my flesh shuddered with perfect aversion. Nor was this aversion peculiar to me, for I perceived that all nature seemed to fly from its presence ; and, indeed, well might nature tremble at the thoughts of an encounter, for the same hunger-bitten follower of DEATH cast a languishing look on every object, and yawned with desire to devour it.

I thought that DEATH was no sooner entered the field, than his meagre and greedy attendant addressed himself to him, in a craving manner, crying—Give, give : on which the cruel skeleton brandished his *shafts*, and fiercely threw from his unerring hand, first at one, then at another object, till whole nations fell almost at once beneath his fatal javelin. One instance, in particular, I saw, of a whole generation being swept away by one stroke of his scythe. Such was the amazing power he had obtained from complicated Sin, that all, especially mankind, fell at the first touch of the destructive dart ; and as soon as fallen, this detested monster licked them up, and the world saw them no more for ever. Here I saw, that this grand *devourer* made no distinction betwixt this and that, but fed with as much delight on the *flesh* of a *beggar*, as on that of *princes* and *nobles* ; the celebrated *beauty*, and the *youthful hero*, afforded no greater relish to the hungry Grave, than the country *landlady* or *rustic swain* ; old and young, beauteous and unseemly, rich and poor, noble and ignoble, were confusedly jumbled together in its insatiable entrails.

At a very small distance from this king of terrors, followed a tall, upright personage, of the exactest symmetry in all her parts ; her mien was noble, and all her gestures uniform. This royal and majestic person sat on a seat of *right judgment*, held a pair of *equal* balances in her hand, and had for her motto, “*I judge according to every man’s works.*” I thought that

this upright lady, who was in herself the most perfect beauty, invested DEATH with dreadful array, and equipped him in most of his terrors; as every human creature, who fell a prey to the Ravager was immediately weighed in her impartial balances. Oh, said I, on seeing the procession, if weighed in these equal and impartial balances, who is he that shall not be found *wanting*?

Last of all, in the train of the skeleton, followed a monster of devilish birth, and of such a form as I had never seen before; it kept its eye, as I thought, continually fixed on the upright lady, whose name was JUSTICE, making inquisition for blood. To this monster was given every person whose actions did not weigh according to the rules of the sanctuary, and they were all stored in its incorrupting bowels. What was very strange, notwithstanding all the persons given to this insatiable monster remained entire within it, it continued as solicitous for more as it was the first moment of its being. Then I thought of that saying, DEATH and HELL are never satisfied.

I stood a considerable time admiring the strangeness of the scene, and soon I discovered something more; for DEATH metamorphosed himself into a dragon of an enormous size, and approached near the place where I had taken my standing for observation. Fearful lest I should be the prey at which he aimed, I began to think of methods of resistance, as I could not reconcile myself to the thoughts of the *grave*; nor was I certified, at that time, that I should escape *hell* if he seized me. Up he came within a very little distance of me, which greatly roused my apprehensions of danger, but to my unspeakable joy he turned off to the left, followed by his dreadful retinue; and, turning my eye to that side of the field, I soon discovered the prey at which he aimed. A beauteous lady in all the grandeur of life, decked with the richest silks, adorned

with gold, pearls, and precious stones; attended by a numerous train of obedient servants, she herself glistening like a goddess in the midst of them. Every attendant carefully observed the glance of her eye, the wave of her hand, or the nod of her head, having learned by these signs to read her ladyship's pleasure.

At first I was much amazed to see this jovial company altogether unapprehensive of danger; none of them seemed to regard the monster's approach, but maintained their jollity with as much delight as if DEATH had never been born. Touched with pity, I waved my hand to awake their attention, and entreated them to beware of yonder dragon; but at that instant I beheld a god, who is said to be president over this world, raise a dust, and spread a mist before their eyes, so that they could not discern the paths of the Destroyer; therefore they rejected my admonitions, scorned my fervour, and bid me begone for a prating fool. But seeing their imminent danger, and moved with concern for them, I disregarded their clamorous speeches, hardened my countenance against shame, and lifted up my voice higher and higher, using many arguments to persuade them that the monster DEATH was even then at hand to devour one or more of them: but all in vain! for they would receive none of my admonitions, and mocked at my zealous concern. At last, unhappy moment! the inexorable tyrant came up with them, and with his forked talons seized my lady in the midst of her jocularities. But, oh! how it would have shocked you to see the consternation she was in, when she first perceived herself envenomed by his poisonous sting. Convinced that her time in this world was just at an end, and to the last degree unwilling to venture into a new state of existence, so much unknown to the best of men, and the dread of those who are ignorant of God, oh! what would she not have given for a short reprieve! Never did

criminal at the bar endure such horror when the judge denounced the tremendous sentence, as this wretched lady felt on the dismal prospect of futurity! If gold and silver could have redeemed her from DEATH, she would freely have given as much as would build a *cathedral*, parted with her attendants and finery, and lived in adversity the residue of her days; or, if she might have been exempted from the dreadful encounter, she would even have given up the beloved pleasures of plays, operas, and dancing assemblies. But, alas! no bribe, nor promise of future amendment, could turn aside the resistless arrow, or procure the once gay delinquent the shortest respite.

She implored the aid of her skilful physician, attended by the faithful apothecary; yea, a whole troop of the faculty were summoned to exercise all their wisdom, by any means to resist the rapacity of the inexorable *tyrant*; but all in vain; for sad experience proved that no medicine, however skilfully prepared, is a sufficient antidote against the poison of DEATH's cankered sting; therefore the lady, however reluctant, was forced to submit to the *monarch of terrors*.

Lest the length of my dream should render it tedious to my readers, if told at once, I shall divide it into several parts, and shall stop; and here for the first time.

PART II.

An Exhortation to Acquaintance with Death.—The Christian's Victory over him.—The Folly of meeting him without due Preparation.—Mankind will not receive serious Admonitions.—Death of an accomplished Female.—Terrors of approaching Dissolution.—Progress of the Soul after Death.—Character of Contumacio.—Disordered State of his Mind.—God manifests his Judgments for the Benefit of Mankind.

HAVING had a full view of all that passed betwixt DEATH and the lady, I could not forbear reflecting on the folly of inconsiderate mortals, who are every hour, for aught they know, exposed to DEATH; and yet live altogether strangers to a certain, an approaching eternity. It is awful indeed to banish the thoughts of futurity from the mind, and assiduously bury every reflection in the moat of sensuality! To rush from one profane delight to another, till unwelcome DEATH puts an end to our career, and serves us as he did the unhappy lady. Oh, what profit is there, said I, in separating less or more time every day for intimate fellowship with Death! In all probability, when grace is given so to do, our conflict with that merciless tyrant is far from being so terribly dreadful. It is true, I profess but a very small acquaintance with men and things; yet I cannot but conjecture, that one reason why this lady and her acquaintance so utterly detested discourses concerning DEATH might be, because such discourses naturally tend to strip the pleasures of the flesh of all their imaginary charms. Then, said I again, O blessed, discriminately blessed of the Lord are they, whose exalted pleasures can consist in the most intimate acquaintance and fellowship with DEATH! They, and all they, are fit to enter the lists with that formidable enemy, who can in lite

maintain converse with him without spoiling the pleasures of the day.

I thought in my dream, that DEATH having finished his business with *madam*, transformed himself from the appearance of a *dragon* into the likeness of a grave and not uncomely personage, clothed in a long flowing white robe, which hid all his native deformities. Thus equipped he directed his course towards me, which once again put me in a panic, lest I should be the destined prey, notwithstanding he was not now so terrible as before; but, as the all directing Power ordained it, he passed by me, his route now lying to the right. My attention being wholly engrossed by the achievements of that terrible hero, I turned my eye after him, and at no great distance beheld a man of a middle age and upright mien, to whom he marched with all possible speed. No sooner was this good man apprized of his approach, than, with a becoming serenity of countenance, he went forth to meet him, and thus addressed him, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, for I long to be dissolved, that my better part may appear in the more immediate presence of the Conqueror." DEATH replied, "Thou guarded one, all I have to do with thee, is to sign thy dismissal from this stage of action, and open thy passage to the land of immortal felicity." He said, and instantly pierced his heart with an arrow dipped in the blood of Emmanuel; and as soon as the venerable man felt the arrow rankling in his bosom, in holy triumph he cried, O DEATH, where is thy sting! and where thy victory, O desired grave! Thanks, eternal thanks be to God, who hath given me, even me, the victory through my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Is this Death? said I: DEATH, who of late was so cruel, when he had to deal with a person of a different turn of mind; call him no more the *monarch of terrors!* Yes, I will still give him that name, for it is

essential to his very nature ; if at any time, to any one he be propitious and gentle, impute it not to any compassion in him, but to the blood, the precious, the atoning blood of the Redeemer ; that blood, whose attractive virtue has drawn the poison even from the king of terrors ; malignant to all, save those whose hearts and consciences by the Divine Spirit are sprinkled therewith.

However, I could not help thinking that there was something in the case of this good man, as remarkably to be desired as that of the lady was dreadful ; and I could then say with Balaam I trust from a better spirit, " Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his."

DEATH, having released from the clayey tabernacle the waiting spirit of this sanctified disciple, changed himself a second time into the appearance of a *dragon*, whetted his sting, and put on all his formidable terrors ; in which equipment, he bended his course towards a magnificent palace, which stood at some distance on this delightful plain. With timorous heart, and careful steps, I followed as near as I might with safety, and attentively watched to see what the next execution would be. At this time there happened to be a ball or dancing assembly in the palace ; an assembly of people from whom every serious thought was banished, and who were wholly devoted to voluptuousness and dissipation. As these people of pleasure intently pursued, with jovial glee, the musical mazes of the dance, invisible DEATH stole in amongst and grinned ghastly upon them ; but, inattentive to the enemy's approach, they persevered in their jocularity till he cruelly pierced the hearts of two of the company, in whom the injected venom rankled, so as to prevent their enjoying a future merry meeting. I trembled with fear lest the rest of the company should be taken . but afterwards understood that DEATH,

rapacious as he is, always narrowly mindeth the contents of his commission, without which he never appears on our mundane coast ; but carries it along with him wherever he goes, and never seizeth any but those whose names and places of abode are specified therein : so that he is liable to no mistake, as he is falsely charged with in the case of the two *Ireneuses*.

I was not a little diverted at the conduct of some people, whom I heard crying out for DEATH, seemingly in good earnest, saying, "Where is propitious DEATH ! O that I knew where I could find him !" but as soon as the terrible *skeleton* presented himself, they fled for refuge to the *doctor's embrace*. Others really amazed me ; for they hunted through the field in a silent pursuit of DEATH, and as soon as they beheld him, plunged themselves into his devouring jaws.

Many such instances I saw, but must at present forbear relating them, lest the length of my dream should give occasion to people of a censorious spirit, to charge me with oversleeping my time : but what I saw filled me with uncommon concern for my fellow-creatures, who are under the arrest of DEATH before they are aware—hurried off from the stage of action, before they well know themselves to be mortal. Grieved to see the thoughtless stupidity of blinded mortals, and the unretarded havoc made of them by merciless DEATH, I cried out in bitterness of soul, "O that they were wise and understood this ! O that they would consider their latter end !"

As I was thus breathing forth desires after the happiness of my contemporaries, a venerable personage approached and accosted me thus : "Young man, I perceive that the visible destruction brought upon mankind hath filled your heart with honest concern : you mourn to them, but they will not lament ; you pipe unto them, but they will not dance ; rather, for your pains, they will laugh you to scorn, and bate you

under the ridiculous name of Fanatic. Mankind, prone to sensual pleasures, and enslaved to fleshly lusts, will not, cannot bear your serious admonitions ; but if you please to go along with me, I will shew you somewhat of the various forms of death, as it is met with by saints and sinners ; which discovery, if attended with the Divine blessing, may be of great advantage to you all the days of your life."

Being naturally of an inquisitive mind, I readily embraced the offered favour, gratefully thanked the gentleman, and pleased myself with the hopes of seeing much of the monster DEATH, with whom I expected, ere long, in cruel conflict to encounter.—But, dear sir, said I, before we depart from hence, let me beg to be acquainted with the story of yonder lady, who was so rudely served by the *merciless* TYRANT. The lady, said he, after whom you inquire, was named *Teresa*, the only daughter of a wealthy gentleman and lady in the neighbourhood ; she was blessed with a person peculiarly elegant and pleasing ; her countenance displayed the most agreeable softness, and her snowy skin even vied with the feathers of the swan for whiteness ; her shape was faultless in the eye of the most discerning, in every part finished with the most perfect symmetry.

Thus accomplished, she was taught from her cradle to value herself upon her beauty and gentility, and her fond and foolish parents soothed her vanity by all that their dotage could contrive ; nor care, nor expense, was thought too much to render her education perfectly polite, and to set off the graces of her frame to the best advantage : but little or no care was taken to improve the infinitely more valuable soul.

Her taste for dress was so remarkably elegant ; her manner of dancing so particularly genteel ; such was her great dexterity at cards ; and so singularly happy was she in devising schemes, and forming parties of

pleasure, that she became the most celebrated *coast* of the day. **Thus** she lived, ravished with false pleasures, and dead to every serious and divine principle, till DEATH seized her unawares, and hurried her off from all her delights into a dreadful and unthought-of eternity, where we leave her in a state for ever *unalterable*, and go over to yonder building, to see what may be learned there.

This said, he conducted me through the spacious meadow, towards a magnificent building of the most curious architecture, erected on four rows of columns, partly of the Corinthian, and partly of the Ionic order, in one corner of the enamelled plain; which palace we entered without formality, my guide leading the way. He was now pleased to take me by the hand, and lead me into a chamber, where were several people of both sexes, attending a sick man, who lay in dreadful distress on a bed of sorrow; he was, to all appearance, very near the expiring moment; every one waited for the last convulsive throe. My guide having, by some wisdom peculiar to himself, rendered us both invisible, unperceived either by him or his attendants, we went up close to his bed-side. He started—he stared, and his eyes rolled most frightfully in his head, as if they had followed some terrible apparition, suddenly traversing the room; then he was seized with convulsive agonies which distorted every one of his feeble organs. In this strange confusion of mind and awful distress of body, he vehemently struck with both hands and feet, as if environed with deathly enemies, from whom he desired an asylum of safety; and, with an eye sanguine beyond conception, he looked on those who attended at his bed-side, as if he would have said, “Oh, that you could help me now in my last difficulties! Ye were the companions and assistants of my former pleasures; but now, alas! ye intermeddle not with my pain. The redemption of

the soul is precious, and ceaseth for ever. Oh, that I had been strangled in the birth, or dropped into the grave from my mother's breast, before I had begun my life of rebellion !”

I thought in my dream that a neighbouring minister came in with a design to assist the dying man in his last extremity ; he prayed for, and would have conversed with him, but all to no purpose ; for the distressed delinquent continued in growing anguish, and could not endure either his prayers or conversation. The mourning relations procured what assistance could be had from the faculty, by all possible means to prevent the success of the ghastly destroyer ? but, alas ! his disease was beyond the power of physic to suppress. His trembling heart beat thick with horror, and found not room sufficient for fair play in his roomy chest, whilst the rank venom of the deadly fever shot through his bowels like a burning arrow, and drank up the streams of life : yet, still studious for his relief, they poured the physic into his tormented body, which only served to augment his pain. Ah ! said I, how feeble are all our friendly efforts, when our unhappy acquaintance has to do with DEATH ! Alas ! what avails it to possess strong and brawny limbs, or square and well-built shoulders, seeing a fit of common sickness debilitates the most robust. Oh, may my glorying be founded on that which neither sickness nor DEATH can destroy ! I was deeply affected with this melancholy spectacle ; his tender wife, and other dear relatives, stood around his bed, bedewing it with floods of tears ; whilst, mad with despair, he tugs eagerly for life, and in dying rage clenches what next comes to hand. O my soul, sure it is a solemn thing to die ; and, oh, tremendous to die in despair, how dreadful ! Even his little children forgot to play, and learned to be serious. In a chamber adjacent to that of their dying father, they

looked wistfully on each other, and gave vent to their infant sorrows. I could not stand the mournful sight, without mingling my tears with theirs. My guide perceiving the impression which the affecting scene had made upon me, rebuked my want of resolution, it being so much depressed before one half of the scene was unfolded, and I, sensible of my defect, submissively yielded to the reproof of my wise superior. I thought that, pleased with my submission, he opened a box of invaluable ointment, and therewith anointed my eyes, whereby they were so much strengthened, that I could readily see things which in themselves are altogether invisible to the unassisted natural eye. Then it was I soon perceived that those convulsive pangs, distorted features, rolling eyes, wild and distracted looks, &c. were not merely the effects of nature struggling with the growing disease but produced mostly from a *mental* cause. A fearful avenue was opened before him, leading into a dreadful ETERNITY, at the not far distant end of which avenue, he beheld the tremendous reward of all his ungodliness; this, this it was which caused such perturbation in his distracted mind; this it was which made death terribly dreadful to him; and this it is which affected my mind now I relate the story.

Nature, utterly reluctant to be dissolved, exerted her strongest powers, and made her utmost efforts to preserve the union betwixt soul and body inviolate.—The alarmed soul, having such an undesirable prospect before her, shrunk down into the lowest caverns of the heart as it were to hide herself from the researches of DEATH, which she saw approaching to dislodge her, and joined issue with shocked nature, to repel the power of the fierce destroyer. But soon, very soon, enfeebled nature, having exhausted her strength, swooned into helpless inactivity; then the frightened soul, finding herself deserted by her weak ally, seemed

half persuaded to yield the debate. Then she quitted her interior lurking places, and quaking as she passed through the lanes of life, ascended to the pale quivering lips, where she sat astonished at the dire event. I thought then of the propriety of those verses of the celebrated Dr. Watts :

“ Death ! 'tis a melancholy day
To those that have no God,
When the poor soul is forc'd away,
To seek her last abode ;

In vain to heav'n she lifts her eyes,
But guilt, a heavy chain,
Still drags her downward from the skies,
To darkness, fire, and pain.”

Dread amazement seized her when she beheld lurking in the chamber a train of ghastly furies, waiting to carry her thence : Precipitately back she fled, resumed her possession of the interior regions, roused up the residue of nature, fled to every avenue, and wildly shrieked for help. But all in vain her unequal resistance : for DEATH, like a staunch murderer, stood firm to his purpose, and closely pursued her through all the lanes of life, till he drove her out of the confines of mortality. At last the fatal moment came, vanquished nature laid down her arms, the weary heart forbore to throb, and DEATH displayed the trophies of victory all around.

DEATH having broke through all the redoubts of desolated nature, the dismayed ghost, now forced forth from her wonted dwelling, remained in a defenceless condition, exposed to the insults of merciless fiends, destitute of an asylum. Unhappy spectre ! as soon as she arrived at the pale portal of the lifeless lips, she began to seek for a place of refuge ; she looked up towards heaven ; but dreadful was the prospect, for she beheld an incensed God loosing his engines, and beginning to play his flaming indignation

upon her: to shun this inevitable evil, she looked downward, but equally terrible was her prospect there; with consummate horror she beheld the yawning jaws of intolerable hell extended wide to receive her. There being now no flying from the environing evils, the swift messengers of destruction seized, shouldered, and bore her away, to appear before the judgment seat of injured and incensed justice, where she received the fearful, the irrevocable sentence, "Depart from me, thou cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." But, oh! no tongue can express, no heart can conceive her struggles and shriekings, when she first felt the tormenting touch of the intolerable talons of hell! her lamentations ascended even to the relentless throne of God.

I thought in my dream, that, by this time, I was almost dead with surprise and fear; but my benevolent guide imparted to me a cordial, in my esteem, infinitely more valuable than all the wealth of the Indies, by which I was much refreshed, and after some time I addressed him thus:

Oh, Sir, what, what have I heard? what have I seen! surely this man must have been some vile, notoriously wicked, and uncommon sinner, which makes his latter end so terrible.

To which the venerable gentleman replied; you may be assured, young man, that the LORD's judgments are just, and that he condemns only in righteousness; and if this man had not been a sinner, his fatal sentence had not been such as you have heard and seen. That he was a great sinner is certain; but that he was greater than others I will not affirm, as there is but too much reason to believe, that there are thousands in the world as wicked as he, who, if boundless mercy prevents not, will meet with the same condemnation with him.

This man, whose fate you so much deplore, was named *Contumacio*, a person ever addicted to rebellion: when young, he had the advantage of a religious education, which was no small aggravation of his future sins, as moral instructions were thereby early impressed on his mind. From hence he was constrained, however reluctant, to have some sense of what is in itself either morally good, or morally evil, and was often subjected to the sting of an uneasy conscience, especially after any gross out-breaking in sin: those pangs of mind extorted from him many promises and strong resolutions of amendment, and oftentimes drove him to his knees, in the closet, as well as to an attendance on public worship frequently on the sabbath-day.

You will not think it strange, I suppose, if I tell you, that by his occasional attendance on the word preached, together with his converse with religious people, he attained a good degree of speculative knowledge both of the law and the gospel. This made him look on himself as a converted person, notwithstanding he possessed not one desire after the heart-cleansing power of religion; but, amidst all his pretensions, allowed himself in secret sin, and pretty often his sins were obvious enough to beholders. As his religion was far from uniform, at some seasons neglecting the word preached, he associated himself with those whom he called *good companions*, and enjoyed the pleasures which flow from drinking and gaming; and, so long as conscience was mild, he laughed at the weakness and narrow-spiritedness of those who could not relish the pleasures which he enjoyed in his indulged liberties.

Thus it was with poor *Contumacio*, for the most part when health and prosperity stretched their easy wings over his dwelling; for he seldom dealt in religion

but in cases of adversity, which, though not often, he was sometimes visited with, as you shall hear.

It was the Lord's pleasure to visit him on a certain time with a violent fit of sickness, attended with many symptoms of imminent danger, insomuch that he thought himself on the very brink of eternity. The dreadful apprehensions of approaching DEATH impressed his mind with much sorrow for sin, and gave birth to some hopes especially with the less intelligent of the godly, that the work might be real and saving, and that his affliction might prove a sanctified means of his conversion. But, alas! my friend, all their hopes were blasted ere they well began to blossom: for as the disease abated of its violence, his convictions abated proportionably; till quite recovered from his bodily complaint, and then he was likewise relieved from the fever of his conscience.

There is an old saying, "Afflictions never fail to make a man either better or worse," exactly verified in this unhappy person; for he increased daily in wickedness to that degree, that he laughed at every thing sacred; for one warning after another being disregarded, it pleased the Lord at last to leave him to work iniquity with greediness." Thus it was that perverse *Contumacio* was hurried forth by his carnal acquaintance, and his own vicious inclinations, from one sin to another, till he hath brought himself to what you have now beheld.

This awful account of the unhappy *Contumacio* greatly affected me; and, as I was deeply musing on what I had heard and seen, my venerable guide thus addressed me: "Come, now let us take a view of the friends of the deceased." And now my attention was wholly engrossed with what passed amongst them, the most of whom were bathed in tears.

God rest his soul, says one, he was as good a natured

man as ever lived. Aye, that he was, says a second, and as good a husband as any in the world, and minded that that was good too; though to be sure, poor man, he was not without his failings; but the best have their failings as well as he. Very true, says a third, God help us, we are all frail creatures; poor man, it is well for him that he has got safe out of this troublesome world; it is better for them that are dead, than for us that are alive; to be sure, he is the happiest of us all. Thus they reasoned, and occasionally threw in consolations in regard to the order of the funeral.

I turned to my guide with amazement on my countenance, and stared him full in the face, on which he stopped me short before I had time to speak, and thus it was he addressed me:

These people have no notion at all of sin being punished after death; but whatever course of life a person has led whilst here on earth, they take his admission into heaven when he dies as certain. Hell might never have been made as a place of punishment, for any notion which they have of it. If you, or any other person, were to tell these people, that their departed friend has already taken up his abode in those dismal, unfathomable depths, where the worm of conscience dieth not, and where the fire of unspeakable torment cannot be quenched, they would look on you as an uncharitable hard-hearted wretch, unfit for the society of mankind. After all you have heard and seen, you will no doubt think it strange, that the minister who shall perform the funeral rites should commit the body of this man, under the name and character of *brother*, to the dust, in a sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection with the just, notwithstanding he is for ever separated from them; and yet I can tell you that such are the ecclesiastical

establishments of some nations, that, was not the minister thus to bury him, it might cost him no less than degradation from his sacred office.*

But, my benevolent friend, may it please you to inform me, whether any reason may be assigned, why this man, although wicked, should be so troubled at his death ; for I have somewhere read, that the wicked have no *bands* in their death, and are not troubled as other men ? To which he replied, Yes, young man, you have so read, if you have read your Bible ; but you may know that poor *Contumacio* was thoroughly awakened to a sense of wrath on account of his sins, and they appeared to him worse than so many *dreary* ghosts, or hideous *spectres*, which made him, as you saw, so terribly alarmed, when the invincible *skeleton*

* I have often thought it a very great hardship upon conscientious ministers of the church of England, that by the office for burying of the dead, they are tied to use the very same form over the greatest of saints and the vilest of sinners, which must be a heavy burden to an honest intelligent mind. The form is admirably adapted to the burial of a saint, but in the highest degree preposterously false and absurd when used at the interment of a wicked man, who dies impenitent and in his sins.

For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed.—This is true of the departed saint ; but with what propriety can it be said of a wicked man that he is a brother to the faithful ? Is the death of such a man in *mercy*, in great mercy ? Hath God indeed taken the soul of the wicked sinner to himself instead of denouncing upon him the sentence exhibited in the word ? *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, &c.* Is this the taking of the soul to himself in great mercy as expressed in the ritual.

We therefore commit his body to the ground, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.—How can this hope of resurrection to eternal life be sure and certain, seeing the wicked shall certainly be raised to everlasting punishment, and shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God. It would be well if some expedient was found for easing the minds of the conscientious part of the clergy, either by accommodating the rites to the death of a sinner as well as that of a saint, or leaving the minister at liberty to use or not use this form, as his discretion might dictate from his knowledge of the party deceased.

approached, and presented the point of his envenomed shaft. A world! ten thousand worlds! would he have given, could he for them have been told how to evade the fatal thrust. But the stroke, not to be evaded, he was obliged to sustain; but, oh! may you never know such a latter end!

His great disorder of mind was partly owing to his being possessed of a larger degree of moral knowledge than some of his neighbours, so that very many of his sins were committed against the light of his own conscience, which made them the more dreadful unto him. But the chief reason is, God doth sometimes alarm the conscience of a departing sinner that he may manifest his judgments for the convincing of some, and leaving of others without excuse.

If you please, I would have you observe yonder woman, who sits pensive at the other end of the room: perhaps her conversion is one end which the Lord proposed by his judgments manifested in this unhappy man: and let me tell you, *Novitio*, I am of opinion that she will never forget this awful providence whilst she herself is continued in being. Believe me, Jehovah's ways are in the deep waters, and by far more intricate than the paths of the whirlwind.—The great, the sovereign householder, hath an indisputable right, if he sees meet, to burn his *wooden* vessels, that with their ashes he may brighten his vessels of *gold* and *silver*. Now you have seen this man, with his end, come along with me, and another scene shall be unfolded.

PART III.

Avaro's dying Advice to his Children.—His Death.—His awful State after Death.—His Character.—Life of Securus.—His Degeneracy.—Power of Sin.—Picture of everlasting Torment.—The Cup of Bitterness precedes the Cup of Salvation.—Hopeless State of Letitia.—Her Character.—Her dying Moments.—Reflection on Death.

I THOUGHT in my dream, that, according to his directions, I followed my guide through divers turnings, in this stately mansion, till we arrived in an apartment, where was an old gentleman, laid on a couch, dictating to an attorney, who sat by him, writing his last will and testament. He signed, sealed, and delivered the deed; and then with the greatest vivacity proceeded to relate the various virtues of his life, seemingly extremely pleased with the recapitulation.

He willed his children to follow his example: and, the better to encourage them to such an imitation, he told them, that it was but a small sum of money which he and their mother possessed at their first entrance on their marriage state; and how, by their diligence and frugality, they had saved so and so, mentioning the legacies which he had bequeathed in his will; adding, that if they were diligent and frugal, they might also, proportionably, increase that which, he blessed God, he had procured for them. He added farther: "My dear children, I am very ill, and doubt I cannot recover; the doctor gives me but little hope, but it is what we must all come to, and you are the witnesses of my conduct, ever since you were capable of discerning betwixt right and wrong. I have been just in all my dealings; never imposed on any man, and now, God help me, I am dying, none that ever I dealt with can say to me, 'Thou didst me wrong, or

thou hast cheated me in this or that. This gives me great satisfaction in my present case. I thank God, I can now say, that I never swore an oath in my days, but have often been angry with that wicked practice in others. I never was drunk ; but always detested that beastly and wasteful sin ; nor, as I remember, did I ever tell a lie ; but have always minded my duty to God, attended at church and sacrament duly ; and, if ever I sinned at any time, I was careful to pray for mercy, was sorry for it, and confessed to God, who is merciful, and will, I hope, pardon the frailties to which we are all subject. If at any time I sinned, it was not with a wicked design ; for, I thank God, I have always had a good heart, and meant well in what I did ; and it were a great sin to disbelieve in the mercy of God. I hope that seeing I have always believed in Christ, been diligent in providing for my family, have carefully husbanded what I got by my business, and have been mindful of my duty to God ; I have little reason to fear but it will be well with me ; and now, as in all probability I cannot recover, I have settled every thing, I hope, to your satisfaction, as well as my own, and can die in peace.”—Thus it was that he instructed his children, in his latest hours, and some of them confirmed all that he said, by applauding the truth of every sentence.—However, I thought all along, that I discerned a secret joy amongst the young people ; notwithstanding, for decency’s sake, they assumed several of the symptoms of grief ; and was confirmed in my opinion, by overhearing the eldest son, when the father said, “ In all probability I cannot recover,” to whisper secretly to himself, “ I hope you cannot ;” and when the old man said, he had settled every thing to his children’s satisfaction, the son whispered again : “ Aye, if you would make quick work of dying.” I then thought how foolish it is in those parents who snatch at every opportunity of amassing wealth for

their children, seeing that thereby they are so far from gaining their love and esteem, that they become impatient for their death, in order to be possessed of their substance.

In the mean while the visitants of the old gentleman comforted him against the fears of death, by putting him often in mind of his life so well spent, which will, said they, no doubt, make you a happy man, as soon as you are delivered from this afflicted body.

Notwithstanding I was greatly surprised at the ingratitude of young *Phylargyrus*, in wishing the death of his father; I could not help being well pleased with the disposition of the old gentleman's affairs; and, turning to my guide, with satisfaction visible on my countenance, I said,

Ah, Sir! what a happiness is it to be rich in good works! Oh, with what pleasure may this man die, when he looks back, and takes a view of a life spent to such great advantage! How vast is the difference betwixt this and the other man's estate! *Contumacio* went distracted into hell, but *Avaro* will doubtless go joyfully to heaven the next moment after his dissolution.

To which my guide replied, I see, *Novitio*, you are too prone to judge according to outward appearance; not considering that appearance and reality are very often two different things; but wait with patience only a little while, and you shall see an end of *Avaro*, with all his happiness, which you so much admire.

By this time I thought that old *Avaro* declined apace, and ever-watchful DEATH, who attended on his bed, imposed a fatal weight on his labouring heart; a dark mist beclouded his heavy eyes, and a cold dew rested clammy on his forehead, so that every pulse was expected to beat a finis. But as there yet remained a few sands in the mortal end of his glass, he recovered a little, and, after some time, he said, I thought I

should have spoken no more ; but I have yet time to bid you farewell ; farewell, my dear children ; I must pay this debt of nature, but my peace is made with God, and I die comfortable. This said, his head declined, his eyes became fixed, and all the symptoms of immediate death were upon him.

It was now that my venerable guide bid me to mind well who were in the chamber with us ; on which, lending a close attention, I beheld several ghastly furies, in all the deformities of reprobation, silently lurking round the bed of the sick man ; but none of them offered to come near to disturb his peace. The good *Veratio*, my benevolent guide, perceiving that the discovery had struck me with horror, willed me not to be afraid ; for, said he, they will all be very quiet till the old man's departure, and even then they will discover themselves to none but him.

You will easily believe, that I now began to change my opinion of *Avaro*, having seen who were his silent attendants. The moment of separation come, the beguiled soul took a kind farewell of the body, and came forth from the interior regions, smiling with hopes of the Divine reward ; and, as soon as she ascended to the lifeless lips, she looked around to espy her tutelar angel ; but, dreadful was her astonishment, when she perceived that there was no guardian near to bear her thence in safety, but a train of relentless furies waiting to carry her to their dark abode ! With infinite terror she turned about, and strove to regain her former possession ; but now, alas ! the gates of mortality were shut, and the body refused to admit its former tenant. The sly seducers, as so many merciless tigers, leaped upon and seized her in the midst of her horror and distraction. Oh ! what heart can conceive, what pen can describe, the dreary distraction of the dismayed spectre, when she found herself shackled by those cruel tormentors ! A faint description thereof

would make the stoutest heart to tremble, and the ruddiest countenance to gather blackness. The sly seducers, who attended him incognito during life, remained quiet as possible till the deceived ghost was safely dislodged, and then they assumed the devil in all his infernal forms and tyranny; seized, fettered, and bore her away, notwithstanding she resisted their fury with inexpressible struggles. O my soul! how dreadful must the disappointment of that man be at death, who in his life-time feeds upon the transient hope of a hypocrite, and builds his expectance of future happiness on a sandy foundation! Instead of being caressed in the bosom of everlasting love, he is enfolded in the arms of eternal despair; instead of partaking of the ineffable joys of the righteous at death, he is precipitately ploughed into the gulph of never-ending anguish.

It was now I began to understand the meaning of such sayings as these: "The hope of the hypocrite shall perish; they look for peace, but behold evil cometh," &c.

Astonished at the event, I turned hastily to my guide, and asked him how it came to pass that a man of so many good works should at last become a prey to devouring flames? Sir, said I, How is it? Can it possibly be consistent with the goodness and equity of God? To which the worthy gentleman meekly replied:

I tell you, *Novitio*, you must not, from what you have seen, infer that the ways of the Lord are unequal, and that he disposeth of his creatures unjustly. For all the good works of which *Avaro* boasted so much, and depended upon for his acceptance with God, were good only in shew; they proceeded not from a principle of living faith; and you are informed by the word of Divine truth, that whatever is not of faith is sin. Nor had the blind *Avaro* the least regard to the

glory of God in all or any of them, but they were performed with a view to answer selfish ends; therefore, when they come to be examined by the eye of impartial justice, they were all accounted as abominable deeds: for no act is acceptable to God, unless it springs from a living faith in Christ, and a principle of love to God. He had attained some slight acquaintance with the external forms of religion, but was wholly a stranger to its heart-cleansing, and world-overcoming power. But however clean he had made the outside of the cup and platter, being inwardly full of ungodliness and error, he was unmeet for, and consequently could not possess a dwelling in the holy of holies. *Avaro*, whilst alive, was one of those deceived people who esteem gain to be godliness; his whole life was spent to the end of getting; and, being successful therein, he valued himself far above others, fondly alledging, that all his increase was owing to his own industry; and if at any time he thought of Divine Providence, he imagined that his worldly prosperity was an evidence of his enjoying the favour of the Almighty. As to his religion, he seldom omitted going to church twice on the Lord's-day; and since he was old and unfit for business, once almost every day, by which he thought he merited greatly at the hand of God; and was the more confirmed in his opinion, inasmuch as some of his neighbours did not attend on public worship once in a month.

When at any time he gave a small part of his substance to feed the hungry or clothe the naked, it was generally to wipe away the score of sin from his conscience; or to prevent his being thought a covetous person; for this was a scandal which he could not endure, but looked on his carefulness as an excellent virtue. Yea, so ignorant was he of the pure and spiritual law of God, that he expected to be rewarded for gathering together fortunes for his children. Some



DEATH A VISION.



THE DYING MISER

He had no pity on the poor.

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legacies he hath indeed left in his will for charitable uses; for he was one of those griping misers who have no heart to do a generous action, whilst their substance may be called their own, and who, to make an atonement for their having withheld more than is meet, bequeath sums of money for the use of public edifices at their death. Strange infatuation, to think that defrauding the legal heir can be acceptable to the infinitely holy God; or in any wise stamp a reputation upon the character of man. Whilst *Avaro* lived there was none in the neighbourhood more successful than him; but, however he succeeded in his former enterprises, he was woefully disappointed in death; for now the die is cast, his loss is irrecoverable; and his afflictions are beyond a remedy. Believe me, young man, continued *Veratio*, all disappointments, losses, and crosses, which can possibly happen in life, are infinitely rather to be chosen, than that disappointment which the successful Pharisee meets with at death.

I was exceedingly shocked at the fearful deception of this worldling, rich in life but poor in death; and in my confusion of mind I breathed forth some such desire as this, "Lord, deliver me from the subtle insinuating love of the world, and stupid ignorance of thy holy ways!" My guide interrupting, said, A suitable prayer; for the love of money is the root of all evil, springing from, and ever attended with ignorance of the holy God; ingenuous and wise was that heart that could suggest such a prayer, as, Lord give me neither poverty nor riches, &c. Which of your acquaintance, *Novitio*, think you, can heartily express such a prayer?

Avaro being stretched out a lifeless clayey corpse, *Veratio* led me away to a third mansion in this stately fabric, where another distressing scene was unfolded.—The unhappy *Securus*, a young man of about twenty-one years of age, was the possessor here; but his term,

alas! appeared to be near at an end, being almost spent in a consumption; yet, unhappy youth, he could not bear to be told that he was a dying man. His relations and friends did what they could to prevent him having any thoughts of DEATH and a future state, by basely and sinfully flattering him with hopes of recovery, notwithstanding they evidently saw, that, without a miracle being wrought, his death was inevitable.

One told him, that she knew a certain person who had been as bad, if not worse, than *Securus* was then, but was now happily recovered, and was as well as ever. Another advised to send to *Mr. Medicus*, a distant physician, who she said had performed wonders in curing consumptions. A third persuaded him that he looked better than formerly, and was likely to recover; but not one of them was faithful enough to put him in mind of approaching DEATH, and a *never-ending eternity*, which he was just ready to launch into, lest they should disturb the tranquillity of his mind.

Grieved in soul to hear them flatter the blinded wretch with hopes of life, even when they saw that his death was to be expected every moment; I was about to have spoken, but my guide prevented, by telling me that his friends would look on me as bad as a murderer if I should disturb his conscience, by asking him any pertinent question relating to a future state. Is this a display of parental affection and brotherly friendship? said I. Miserable relations! Unprofitable and pernicious friends, whose very friendship is the most barbarous cruelty! It is not enough that he hath lived a life of unintermitted rebellion against God; but you must study to get him out of the world insensible of it! Wretched ministers of false comfort are you all! O my God, let me ever be preserved from the fatal influence of soothing flattery! This said, my guide addressed me in the following manner: This is young

Securus, a thoughtless youth, accustomed to put the evil day afar from him, minding only the present time; for if it happened, as sometimes it did, that the thoughts of DEATH encroached on his mind, he lulled his conscience to quietness, by promising to repent of his sins, and amend his ways hereafter, when he was old, and had enjoyed the pleasures of life, little thinking that he was to be cut off in the very bloom of youth. *Securus* was one of those who pretended to be zealously affected for the church, but never came near its assemblies; and even now, in his latest hours, he has not the least thought of DEATH and eternity; but is angry with the physician because he will prescribe no more medicines for him. Still he hopes to prolong his life, notwithstanding his lungs are so far spent that he can hardly utter one half of a contracted sentence. In all appearance he will never think of DEATH and judgment, heaven and hell, joy and pain, till the flaming torments playing around him rouse his sleeping soul. Then, if not before, he will begin to think of eternity. At last he will be convinced, that the torments of hell are insupportable, and of never-ending duration, though he disregarded every threatening thereof, denounced in the sacred oracles.

Vain *Securus*, whilst in health and prosperity, laughed at the timidity of those who had any dread of offending a holy and terrible God; and accounted religion to be nothing else but whining hypocrisy: but ere long he will feel to his sorrow that the wrath of a sin-avenging God is indeed something to be afraid of, and that religion is real and not chimerical.

In health he accounted the lives of the religious to be madness, and their latter end without honour. So he lived, and now his insolence in basely contemning the ways and people of the Lord hath issued in that stupefaction of mind, which ere long will terminate in intolerable anguish; then he will be fully convinced

that his supposed fools are the only wise ones on the face of the earth, and that their latter end is more honourable than that of all men besides.

This awful proof of degeneracy touched me so sensibly, that, as I thought, I uttered some such lamentation as this :

O sin ! monstrous beyond all productions ! Thou most abominable of every evil ! Thou hast bereaved us of our native knowledge, possessed in our creation state, and diffused darkness through the whole understanding. Thou hast changed our ancient love into present hatred, and all our former holiness gives place to sinful insensibility. Can a man stand at the entrance of the grave, and there concert the schemes of earthly pleasures ? Having his feet on the threshold in the gates of perdition, can he yet believe himself in a land of security and rest ? Who could ever conceive, without ocular demonstration, that such blindness over-spreads the mind of a rational being, as shall cause him to look on his body as tenable, even when in the chilling embraces of desolating DEATH ? But so it is, through thy prevalency, thou most loathsome of every nature ! By thee destruction overwhelms the human race, thou fertile source of innumerable evils ! Oh, let me for ever admire the discriminating grace of the great Three in One, who by the special influences of the Divine Spirit hath realized sin to me in all its hateful deformities and dreadful consequences ; hath made my once stupified and benumbed conscience feel a gentle touch of his fatherly anger on its account ; hath given me a detestation of sin ; and hath, according to his own purpose and grace, been pleased to lead me for a pardon and acceptance unto that precious blood, enriched with all the fulness of indwelling Godhead ! O my soul ! bless thou the Lord for a sense of sin ; for though it is painful, it is also salutary. Let them not be accounted for thy companions,

who deem a sense of sin to be superfluous in religion.

It was now that I thought my guide *Veratio* interrupted me, just as the sin-hardened *Securus* departed this life; and said, Thoughtless he lived, and thoughtless he died; but now he is thoughtful enough. Believe me, *Novitio*, he hath already thought more of hell, sin, and rebellion, than ever he did in all his life. Look you, *Novitio*, to yonder lake of fire and brimstone, where he is already plunged, undergoing the unknown tortures of the second death. And now he hath a never-ending eternity before him, to think of what is past, and what is future. Unhappy is he who is thoughtless in life, and unprovided for in death, like the wretched *Securus*! A pompous funeral is indeed designed him; but, alas! what pleasure can lifeless clay, or a tormented ghost, take in funeral pomp, or the crocodiline tears of the mercenary mourner? But let us leave his relics to endure that honour designed to be imposed upon them, and let you and I see what farther discoveries we can make.

Oh, Sir, said I, what dreadful scenes you unfold! Is this, *Veratio*, the portraiture of unmasked death? Do all my fellow-creatures die thus miserable? And is there no such thing as a comfortable DEATH to be seen? Oh, Sir, my very flesh shudders at these awful discoveries!

My guide replied, Know, young man, that sorrow is antecedent to joy, grief before consolation, darkness before light, and humility before honour. Shrink not back when the cup of bitterness kisseth your lips, seeing it is preparative to the cup of salvation. But if *Novitio* trembles to see such horrible appearances of DEATH, only think what they must feel who endure them? However, compassionating your timorous disposition, I shall shew you but one instance more of the death of the ungodly; after which I shall endeavour

to recompense your pain by more pleasant discoveries. I mean, I shall discover unto you some of the godly, with their latter end. In the mean while, let us attend the disconsolate *Letitia* in her departing agonies.

This said, he led me away to a magnificent apartment, decorated with all the productions of art. In this apartment, brilliant as it was, we saw a lady, whom all the riches of the east could not make happy: she lay on a bed of down, surrounded with hangings of damask, it is true, but found no more rest than if she had lain on a flinty rock; she was under the power of an inveterate malady, and had been so for several years: but greatly added thereunto by murmuring at, and repining under, the afflictive dispensation. She seemed to me to be about thirty-five years of age, and had been possessed of a goodly measure of external beauty, before it was blasted by this inveterate evil; so that whilst a maiden, she was what we commonly call a genteel lady; and whatever qualifications *Teresa* could boast of, were all to be found in the youthful *Letitia*. In her affliction, which was grievous, being a cancer in her breast, she greatly envied the happiness of her visitors, purely because they enjoyed health, the loss of which she inconsolably lamented; and instead of receiving the visits of her friends with that grateful civility, which might have been expected from a person of her rank and education, reduced to such distressing circumstances, she was used to give it them in some such terms as these:

“It is well for you; you can go abroad at your pleasure, and visit your friends, and with them partake of the sweetness of life. You may make much of it now, for you have all the genteel amusements to yourselves; as for me, I know not what evil I have committed more than others, that I should be imprisoned in this solitary place, to endure such racking pains as I do. I hear of many who have lived far more liberally

than ever I did, who still continue to enjoy all the pleasures which either town or country can afford ; but I must lie here on this irksome bed, and nobody knows when I shall be able to go abroad, so much as to take an airing, or to see one friend or another. I employ the best physician in the county ; but how it is, I know not ; he can cure others, but all his prescriptions seem to be lost upon me." It was thus she entertained her friends, and thus she rendered herself disagreeable to all that came near her.

A godly minister in the neighbourhood was used occasionally to visit her, though his company was never very desirable, his conversation being by far too serious for a lady of her disposition of mind. Her elevated station, and the known precariousness of her temper, long deterred him from dealing so faithfully with her as he desired ; but at last he greatly offended, by telling her that she ought to consider herself as a dying woman, who must soon give an account of all her actions to a just and impartial God, whose sentence cannot possibly be evaded. He faithfully told her that she must be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and sprinkled with the blood of Christ, before she had any reason to expect that her death would be comfortable. He told her, that unless she was renewed by the Holy Ghost, no regard would be paid at the great tribunal to her elevated station in life : for only those, in every nation, who fear God and work righteousness shall be saved ; for the Lord God, said he, is no respecter of persons.

By this seasonable advice, and salutary instruction, the good *Philanthropos* incurred her ladyship's displeasure so far, that she could never after gratefully receive a visit from him, but was always sullen and out of temper in his company.

The venerable *Veratio* turned himself to me, and thus he said : *Letitia* was a fine gentlewoman, a

descendant of a right honourable and illustrious family, genteel and handsome in the graces of her person, and by birth entitled to an ample fortune. Her noble parents, with all imaginable tenderness, from her earliest days, indulged her to the last degree; they never cared to cross her inclinations to restrain her humour, however extravagant; by which means she became imperious and haughty, a perfect humourist in her temper. From her youth upward she was inured to all the vanities of the town; the park, the play-house, and the opera, were as familiar to her as her bed-chamber; and well she knew how to act her part in every polite entertainment. Her beauty, rank, and fortune, brought a noble earl lawfully to her bed, about the age of twenty-one. Being commenced wife, she abated nothing of the pleasures to which she had devoted herself, but added very considerably thereunto, by receiving and returning many useless and unprofitable visits, until the fatal time on which she was seized by this malignant evil, which is indeed the forerunner of her death; and then she was out of temper with every body who came near her. Husband, children, and servants, all shared in her anger. Letitia's beauty was esteemed more than eastern pearls; she vainly imagined that the diamond lost its brilliance when her eye deigned to glance upon it; the damask rose its loveliness, when compared to her more lovely cheek; and the coral she supposed to yield all its perfection and own itself undone when her mellifluous and pleasant lips were unmasked; but poignant pain, and frequent sickness, greatly impairing her adored beauty, surprisingly added to her affliction. So long as her strength would admit, she was wont to try her features in the looking-glass oftener than once a day; but how the faithful mirror was charged with falsehood, and bore the weight of her indignation, is not worth your while to hear, or mine to relate.

Oh, Sir, said I, methinks that on all our looking-glasses this motto, MEMENTO MORI, ought to be written, and a DEATH's head fixed on the top of every frame; for even beauties, who delight to gaze upon looking-glasses, meet with no reprieve from DEATH.

That son of Melpomene, who so judiciously hath drawn the portraiture of the grave, represents beauty as not one whit more grateful to the worms than deformity, and as certainly their feast. If you please, Sir, I shall recite the passage to you, as it is not very long :

“ Beauty ! thou pretty play-thing ! dear deceit !
 That steals so softly o'er the stripling's heart,
 And gives it a new pulse unknown before !
 The grave discredits thee : thy charms expung'd,
 Thy roses faded, and thy lilies soiled :
 What hast thou more to boast of ? will thy lovers
 Flock round thee now to gaze and do thee homage ?
 Methinks I see thee with thy head low laid,
 Whilst surfeited upon thy damask cheek,
 The high-fed worm, in lazy volumes roll'd,
 Riots unscar'd. For this was all thy caution ?
 For this thy painful labours at the glass ?
 T' improve these charms, and keep them in repair,
 For which the spoiler thanks thee not. Foul feeder !
 Coarse fare and carrion please thee full as well,
 And leave as keen a relish on the sense.”

BLAIR.

According to the doctrine of this solemn bard, Sir, every time that the beautiful lady tries her graces in the glass, she should reflect how the worms will one day burrow in her cheeks ; and her eyes become the nauseous habitation of loathsome insects ; that she shall then be on a level with the meanest beggar who ranges the streets of the metropolis, and yield no higher relish, though fed with turtle, to the worms than the miscreant who keeps life in his body by mouldy bread, and the garbage of the kitchen, scarcely procured by lowly cringes, and the most fervent intreaties.

Aye, said *Veratio*, Mr. Blair may sing in that solemn strain, till he break the strings of his lyre, before the beaux and belles of our day are likely to mind what he says; for, to this day, it hath been at the peril of any servant or attendant whatsoever to tell *Letitia* that her looks are altered; nor hath her physician and surgeon ever dared to tell her that her disease is incurable. Full of pain indeed is the unhappy lady; but she languisheth out her time in murmuring and repining at the sad dispensation, and envying the happiness of others.

My guide finishing here, I thought in my dream that her physician entered the chamber, and feeling the lady's pulse, she asked him, if he thought there were any hopes of her recovery? The doctor replied, "I am afraid, madam, there are not." Then she fell into a fit of visible discontent, and sinfully uttered many things against the ways of the Almighty; and continued, to her last, charging him with inequality.

The time of her departure being come, I saw terrible sights; her life having been spent in gaiety and madness, her latter end was without honour; for no sooner was the unhappy soul grove forth from the once delicate body, now the vanquished prey of relentless DEATH, than she was seized by the cruel messengers of destruction, and forcibly dragged to appear at the equitable bar of a *pride-resisting* God, from whence, as a just reward of her unholy life, she was sent bound hand and foot to be cast into outer darkness, where the worm dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched: there she wept, she wailed, and gnashed her teeth. There she found many of her former companions; but, alas! their wonted mirth was departed, a horrid despair sat louring on every countenance; whilst the convulsive bowels of ever-dismal hell rolled her impetuous billows upon them and every single sense drank in the unutterable torment.

'The miserable end of *Letitia* thus surveyed, I cried out, O God ! who hath hardened himself against thee, and hath prospered ? If a self-adoring Pharaoh says, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him ?" Thou hast a Red sea in which he and his host shall be drowned. If a haughty Nebuchadnezzar say in his heart, "This is great Babylon, which I have built for the house of my kingdom, and for the glory of my majesty ;" the heart of a beast shall be given to him, and he shall eat grass like the oxen in the field ; and if a God-forgetting lady shall spend her life in the pursuit of transitory pleasures, the sequel shall prove, that she has been dead to God whilst she lived to herself.

Then turning to my guide, I said, I perceive, Sir, that DEATH is no respecter of persons, knoweth no distinctions, can neither be bribe nor moved by intreaty, much less can be resisted by power. No, no, replied *Veratio*, DEATH cannot be intreated, is an utter stranger to distinctions ; the majestic prince, and the rustic peasant ; the noble earl, and his servile groom ; the amiable lady, and the scorched cook-maid ; are equally the same to his indiscriminating shaft ; all distinctions vanish in the grave, that common receptacle of rich and poor, noble and ignoble, beauteous and unseemly, old and young, the lordly prelate and famished curate, all ranks and degrees of men meet here on a common level ; in this respect, one end happeneth unto all men. People of distinction too often desire no other heaven besides the vain and fantastic pleasures of life, little considering that ere long they must bid adieu to sublunary enjoyments : and the most high God hath fixed it as an invariable maxim, that the desire after, must precede the enjoyment of heaven. Hence, no desires after the future enjoyment of God being possessed in this life, it is not

rationally to be expected, that they can enter into the celestial felicity at their death.

These earthly gods, continued *Veratio*, are much dissatisfied if they receive not a great degree of homage from their inferiors in life; but, believe me, nothing is more common than for them at death to stand trembling under the force of self-conviction, before the judgment-seat of the King of kings, who hath declared himself to be no respecter of persons.

Then, said I, woe is **me** for my fellow-creatures! Into what destruction has sin involved them! How few, alas! are they who know the things which make for their eternal peace, before they be for ever hid from their eyes! Unhappy, most emphatically unhappy, indeed are they, whose only heaven consists of glittering dust, and whose bliss is composed of the empty honours and wretched pleasures of this seducing and bewitching world. Let honours in the highest degree be imposed upon me, and let me enjoy all that men call happiness; what will it profit if my soul must be banished, for ever banished, from the amiable presence of my God? Can these, *Veratio*, ever be deemed an ample compensation for the loss of God, in his Divine excellences and glorious subsistences? A lean, an empty heaven indeed it must be, where this is wanting O my soul, let thy delights for ever be attracted by the refined, the sublime pleasure of our holy religion! and thou, my heart, look down with indifference upon all those fineries which worldlings so much admire!

PART IV.

Approaching Death of Humilius.—His Penitence.—His Consolation.—His Character.—The Ways of God justified to his People.—Address of a dying Christian.—Entrance of Humilius into Heaven.—Celestial Concerts.—Humilius presented at the Throne of God.—Death of the Righteous and the Wicked contrasted.

HAVING thus spoken, I thought my guide, the good *Veratio*, led me from this to another apartment in the opposite side of this stately building; and, as we entered the apartment, I heard a person, with a mournful tone of voice, thus express himself: "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage, a few days, and full of sorrow." What is the meaning of this? said I; this is a strange kind of saying. To which he replied, You will understand this better hereafter. When we entered the chamber, I saw a grave man of advanced years, who seemed to be in great distress both of body and mind; and thus he addressed some of his friends, who it seems had been endeavouring to comfort and strengthen him on the prospect of dissolution.

"O my friends, you little know what a sinner I have been! let sinners of highest rank be thought of, and I assure you I am worse than all; yea, I am the very chief of sinners; the vilest and most unworthy creature in the world. Oh! how justly doth the Lord afflict me now! he leaves me not comfortless in my last trials without dreadful provocations: such provocations as make my very heart bleed to think of them: justly, alas! I am left to the scourge of an evil conscience, and made an instance of the terrible displeasure of an offended God. Oh, what innumerable mercies have I enjoyed at his hand; but such have been

the depravity of my nature, the sinfulness and rebellion of my life; that I have grossly abused, and trampled them all under my feet; and what can I now expect but to be for ever banished from the presence of Him whose goodness I have so grossly abused, and against whom I have most ungratefully sinned. I tremble to think of enduring his displeasure; but if I must endure it, I know it is my desert, and in my condemnation I will confess him righteous, for I, only I, have destroyed myself."

Here he was stopped by excess of grief, which vented itself in a flood of tears, and one of his friends who sat by him thus replied: "My dear friend, I am exceedingly surprised to hear you lay such heavy accusations against yourself. You charge yourself with the worst and basest of crimes; whereas all we, your friends and acquaintances, who have been the witnesses of your conduct, are fully convinced that ever since you made a profession of religion, your whole conversation hath been unblamable, and becoming true godliness."

To which the sick man replied: "O my friend! it is that, it is that which grieves me now! Oh, how it pains me to think, that people, who could only see my outside appearance, took me to be somewhat, when, alas! my own heart all along told me that I was nothing. Even now, the discovery of the pride and hypocrisy of my heart is a burden intolerable. I would fain have been sincere, it is true, and I often thought that I strove for it: but, O wretched and miserable creature that I am, I could never attain it. Sometimes, formerly, I flattered myself that I was one of the Lord's people; but now the disguise is taken off, and I am convinced that I have been, and still am, an enemy to all real righteousness, an utter stranger to the heart-purifying religion of the holy Jesus.

"Oh! it grieves me, to think how I have imposed

upon the church of Christ, where I have only been an intruder, a vile tare growing up among the Lord's wheat, a filthy goat amongst the innocent sheep of the Redeemer; but now it is my greatest fear, that I shall be for ever separated from both him and them."

Here he was again stopped by the anguish of his spirit; and, after a few minutes, another friend of his, in a spirited manner, replied: "My dear brother, this is only a temptation of the enemy; and such, I trust, ere long you will find it to be. It hath pleased the Lord to withdraw from you for a moment, and for holy ends, and to leave you to the buffetings of Satan: but, believe me, believe God himself, he will return with mercy and salvation, and with everlasting loving-kindness he will gather you. What, though your sins are great, the merit of the Redeemer's sacrifice is infinitely greater; what, though the cry of them reach even to the heavens, his precious atonement surmounts them all; yea, although they are of a scarlet or crimson stain, the blood of Jesus the Son of God shall wash you and make you white as wool, or the whiter snow. Satan is indeed permitted, as the accuser of the brethren, to load your conscience with heavy accusations; but yet a very little while, and the base accuser shall be cast down; Satan shall be trampled for ever under your victorious feet.

"Let my friend consider the many great and precious promises which are made to the 'poor in spirit, the weary and heavy laden, the captive, the broken-hearted sinner, the hungering and thirsting soul, the mourner for sin,' &c. these are the names and characters of the Redeemer's people, and all these meet together in my brother; which is to us, though not to yourself, an evident token of your adoption by grace into the elect family. Had he not loved you, he would never have put his own seal upon you; had he not chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of

the Spirit, you could never thus have groaned under the depravity of your nature ; and having loved you, it is with an everlasting love, a love which never can alter, but is sure to endure to the end. How can my brother sink whilst the arm of everlasting love is underneath him? Or perish whilst the eternal God is his refuge? O my friend ! think of the above characters of the redeemed, and try if you find not some of them belonging to yourself."

He ceased here, and the sick man with a trembling voice, replied : " I thank you, my dear Sir, in the most grateful manner, for your tender care for my welfare : but, alas ! I can see nothing in me that looks in the least like to the character of the Redeemer's people. I see no promise in the Bible that belongs to me ; for a word of promise would be a comforting stay to my sinful soul, now in my last distress. It is true, that many times in my life the trouble of my mind hath been alleviated by such considerations as you propose ; but now I am a dying man, ready to land upon a dark eternity, and cannot draw rational conclusions from such considerations. O eternity ! eternity ! nothing can make me look into eternity with pleasure, or render DEATH in any wise comfortable, but a sensible manifestation of my interest in the death and resurrection of Christ, the Spirit himself bearing witness with my own spirit that I belong to, and am born of God. The pain of dying is nothing when compared with the pangs of soul that I feel in looking forward to a dreadful futurity : I may now say in the language of the Psalmist, ' Deep calleth unto deep ; at the noise of his water spouts, all his waves and billows are gone over me, I sink in deep waters, wherein there is no standing.' I know, my friends, you would have me trust in God, and apply the promises to myself ; and gladly I would ; but I find that I can as soon remove mountains, and cast them into the sea, as trust and

believe in God with a faith of appropriation. He hideth himself from me, and how shall I discern him? Oh, that I knew where I might find him! I would come with Job, even to his seat, and spread my complaint before him; but, alas. he covereth himself with darkness, and will not admit of my approaches; I press forward, but cannot find him; I look back to past experience, but can see no track of his Spirit's work; I turn me to the right hand and left, but can perceive nothing at all of him. On the contrary, I am environed with devils, and my own sins, which are more dreadful to me than all the infernal tribes: these only do separate betwixt me and the God of Salvation."

I thought that here the poor man's words were a third time interrupted with the agitation of his grief: and he shed abundance of tears: his friends prayed with and for him; fervent and much distressed they seemed to be in prayer; every one imitating the conduct of the wrestling patriarch, when at Peniel. They likewise reasoned with him concerning the immutability of Divine love, the infinite value of the blood of Christ, the certainty of the promises of the covenant, the wise ends which God might have, in withdrawing from him, in his calamity, the assurance which the Scripture gives us of the Holy Spirit finishing his work in the souls of his people, and the confirmed malice of the implacable tempter. They likewise expressed their hope that the Lord would yet appear for him in a way of consolation, before he would take him down into the dark valley of the shadow of death; but, if it should be otherwise, they were assured of his landing safe on that shore of felicity; but all their endeavours seemed to be fruitless, for he still persisted in his belief that the righteous God had, in strict justice, cast him off, as unworthy of a place among his chosen ones.

I now turned to my guide with disdain on my countenance, and thus addressed him: Ah, Sir, what a wretched deceiver this man must have been, in his lifetime, that he is thus given up to the scourge of an evil conscience at his death! Oh! it is a fearful thing thus to play the hypocrite with God.

To which my guide, with some warmth, replied: I told you before, *Novitio*, that you must not always judge of a man's estate according to his outward appearance. This man, whom you so rashly censure as a deceitful hypocrite, is the good *Humilius*: so far from being what you apprehend, that he is one of the precious sons of Zion, a faithful disciple of the Redeemer, and special favourite of Jehovah, whose ways are in the deep waters and whose judgments are unsearchable. Few have equalled this venerable saint for fervour of spirit and sanctity of life, and few have drank so deep of the heavenly Spirit of the immaculate Jesus, notwithstanding he is thus tried like silver in the furnace. Whilst health and vigour attended *Humilius*, he was blessed with a greater than ordinary discovery of his own sinfulness, both in the root, and in the fruit; and he was one of the very few who daily grieve under a sense of the pollutions of their depraved hearts, and consequently under a sense of the defilement and imperfections of their best services. This discovery greatly tended to lessen his comfort and joy, so that he seldom had those elevations of spirit with which some are favoured; but, at the same time, it had a happy tendency to make him extremely careful of all his proceedings. His conscience was affected with the slightest touch of sin, and smote him even for an unsanctified thought. He retained such a sense of sin, that he was always low and mean in his own esteem. Saying with some ancient worthies, "so foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee; I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men,

and have not the understanding of a man." Contrary to the practice of many professors, he accounted himself the unworthiest of all, utterly unworthy of a place in the church of Jesus. On the other hand, his fellow Christians looked on him as a man of exemplary piety, holy and unrebukable in his conversation in the church, and in the world: patient in tribulation, fervent and constant in prayer, desiring not his own, but the glory of God: nor his own so much as the good of the Redeemer's people.

This unexpected account of *Humilius* greatly amazed me, and made me more solicitous to know what might be the event.

Therefore I addressed my guide in the following manner: Venerable Sir, I readily acknowledge my error, and humbly beg your pardon for my foolish censure; and I pray you would signify your forgiveness by informing me, whether it is possible for such as you have described *Humilius*, to be cast off by the Almighty, and at last to perish. To which I thought *Veratio* replied: No, *Novitio*, it cannot possibly be that such an one can perish, for there are none but the regenerated who can answer the description which I have given of the good *Humilius*; and any one may know, that none are regenerated but those who are the objects of God's special love; that all those he loves with an everlasting love he loves to the end; therefore, however dark he may be in regard to union with, and interest in, the Lord Jesus Christ, and through him in the love of God, it is not possible that he can perish. These are dark paths, *Novitio*, through which *Humilius* is led; nevertheless they are sure paths, and lead directly to the kingdom of light; and let me tell you, he is led even now by the fountain of light himself, notwithstanding he seems to be blind to any sense of his leader's presence. His patience under his affliction, his resignation to the Divine will, with respect to

bodily pain, his abhorrence of himself on account of sin, and his justifying the ways of God, together with his earnest desire after forgiveness and acceptance, are so many evidences of his interest in the love of God, though at present he can see none of them.

Sir, said I, permit me to ask you another question, for I am born to be troublesome. Can there be any reason assigned why the Lord should suffer some of his dearest saints to fall into such desertion and distress in their latest hours?

Yes, *Novitio*, said he, some reasons may be assigned why it should sometimes be so; but want of love in God to their persons, want of tenderness in the Redeemer, can never justly be thought to be the reasons for it; but God hath holy ends to answer by every part of his procedure, and no doubt by this dispensation also. I suppose that one end, which he may propose by the troubles of good *Humilius*, may be, to stir up his professing people to double their diligence in the use of all appointed means, thereby to make their calling and election sure to themselves; that when they arrive at their latest hours, they may be exempted from those spiritual conflicts with which they see others exercised.

Ah! but Sir, said I, how is it that the Lord maketh choice of those who are most eminent in holiness, to endure those afflictions, which are designed for the edification and improvement of their surviving brethren?

Veratio replied, There is no necessity that I know of, *Novitio*, for you to ask a reason for the proceedings of the Almighty; nevertheless the difficulty here vanisheth, when it is considered, that for the Most High to choose, for such purposes, persons whose conduct hath been less guarded, would not answer the end designed. We naturally expect that professors who are unguarded in their conduct, and remiss in the known duties of

religion, will find hard work of it on a death-bed, which will be no less troublesome to them than if they lay upon pointed flints ; so that, although the party himself may at last be saved, it is through fiery temptations and grievous afflictions ; but when Christian people behold a person of the most circumspect and conscientious conversation springing from principles of the most eminent piety, mourning after an absent God, and lamenting his sins, which all the world besides himself are strangers to, it naturally tends to stir up each to self-examination, and to consider his own ways. The learned Fleming relates a story of a northern worthy, who had been, in divers cases, favoured with an extraordinary discovery of the mind and will of God, who, when he came to a death-bed, called his friends to him, and thus addressed them : “ O my friends ; I find it a greater matter to be a real Christian, and unrebukable before God : I declare to you, that such hath been my support for the space of ten years past, that God hath not been out of my thoughts as long at once, as one might go to the Cross and come again (which might be done in ten minutes) unless I have been asleep or about business, and after all, I assure you, that I am even now at the very brink of despair.”

Another end which God may have in view, perhaps, may be, to remove the carnal confidence which his own people are too prone to have, in the grace which they have already received. In some frames, instead of studying to be strong in the grace that is in Christ, they are strong in that which is implanted in themselves. Vainly imagining that they can overcome the severest trial in the strength thereof. With an ancient professor, when he stood on a place slippery enough, they say, “ My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved ;” not considering that the Christian’s conquest depends not on the grace which he hath already

received, but on fresh supplies communicated in the time of need, from him in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. All fulness dwelling in Jesus naturally supposes that there is nothing but emptiness in the creature, and that therefore the sublime exercise of Christian faith consists in a constant reliance upon God in Christ, for mercy to pardon every sin, and for grace to help in every time of necessity.

Now when Christian people behold the greatest of saints labouring in the dark, under the severest buffetings and sharpest conflicts of soul, it naturally tends to make them suspect their supposed strength, and to exercise themselves in an habitual reliance upon God. And, seeing their need of fresh supplies of grace, how naturally are they led by such dispensations to the inexhaustible fountain of all fulness, for strength proportioned to their day of difficulty and trial; and especially for large supplies in their death-bed trials, because very often they are found to be the greatest; and well it is that the Lord is pleased by any means to teach his people to live upon himself.

But come, *Novitio*, and I will discover to you the immediate cause of the sorrow of good *Humilius*.

This said, the venerable *Veratio* anointed my eyes with the precious eye-salve, and in an instant I discerned a deformed fiend couching close by the side of *Humilius*, and whispering him in the ear; and, at every sigh which the good man made, through the pressure of his grief, the malicious fury smiled a most ghastly grin. But, giving a close attention to this *evidence-darkener*, I perceived a chain harder than adamant around his middle, the end of which was secure in the hand of a majestic person, who shone brighter by far than the sun in his strength; by which I saw, that, although it may please the Almighty sometimes to permit Satan to disturb the minds of his chosen ones,

he never suffers him to destroy them ; and that he can go no further than permitted by the Divine Redeemer.

Learn from hence, *Novitio*, said *Veratio* to me, that the same enemy who allures to sin, whilst in health and prosperity, will, if permitted, tempt to despair in a state of sickness and adversity. And be you, yea, let every Christian be thankful that Satan is ever kept under a suitable restraint by the power of Almighty God ; otherwise feeble mortals must of necessity sink under his great superiority.

Here my guide ceased ; and, as I thought, the good *Humilius* for the last time opened his mouth, and said ; “ Ever since I knew any thing of religion, flying to Christ has been my last resource. I am now dreadfully oppressed with the weight of my sins ; but whither shall I fly for help, but to the mercy of that God against whom I have sinned ? He only hath the words of eternal life. There is none in the heavens above, none upon the earth below, that can help me but Him ; as it has been in my life-time, so it is now ; this is my last resource ; I die if I trust him not ; I can but die if I trust in him ; therefore I will prostrate my soul at the foot of his throne, and there will I sue for mercy ; if I perish, I perish ! and if I should, as I deserve, be spurned from his presence, it shall be relying on his own blood and righteousness, for there is salvation in none other.”

Having uttered these words, with the dying rattle in his throat, his speech failed to the great grief of his godly acquaintance, some of whom said, “ Alas ! lest this should be a mean of turning the lame out of the way.” One thing I beheld pleased me mightily, which was this, the moment that good *Humilius* ceased to speak, the majestic person of whom I spoke, who shone so gloriously, gave the chain, wherewithal the fury was bound, a severe twitch, and obliged him to leave the good man to his rest ; which so enraged the

squalid infernal, that he growled most horribly, and in anguish gnawed the adamantine chain; then disappeared, and I saw him no more.

In the mean while my benevolent guide, by some supernatural means, opened my ears that I could hear, and in some measure understand, the language of spirits; which I no sooner perceived, than with all diligence I attended to what now passed with the good *Humilius*; in whose concerns I found myself by this time deeply interested. As I listened, I heard the Almighty, who but a little before seemed to stand upon mount Sinai, surrounded with clouds of darkness, and horrible tempest, now speak from Mount Sion in a still small voice, and said to the speechless man, "I have loved thee with an everlasting and immutable love, therefore I have drawn thee by dark paths to myself; yea, I have caused thee to pass under the rod, and have brought thee into the bond of the covenant. The way which I led thee thou knowest not, but I have made crooked places straight before thee, and rough places smooth: thy warfare is now accomplished, and I have bruised Satan for ever under thy feet."

The dying man no sooner felt the blessed effects of the well known voice of God, than in an ecstasy of joy he mentally replied, "My Lord, and my God! Now, DEATH, do thy worst; come as soon as thou wilt, thou awful skeleton, for now thou art welcome. Now my Lord is returned with loving kindness, I can with pleasure enter thy cold embrace, and repose my flesh in thy gloomy mansions. Hasten thy pace, thou tardy executioner; cut short thy work, thou friendly enemy; I long to enjoy the beatific vision of Him who loved me to the death, and washed me in his blood, enriched with all the fulness of indwelling divinity."

I saw in my dream that guardian angels descended from heaven, in blazing squadrons, to attend the dismission of this sanctified soul, and to guard her

passage to the celestial world. As the good *Humilius* ceased to breathe, the attending angels clapped their wings for joy, that one more of the chosen race had passed through the glory-birth, that one more of the elect charge was safely gathered home: with holy fervour they saluted the glorious spirit, and bid her welcome into the undisturbed rest of their splendid society. She thankfully received their pure caresses; and, struck with wonder and astonishment at unspeakable grace, she instantly mixed her melodious voice with those warbling choristers, her companions, who sung the most delightful song to which ever ear attended. I thought I could discern the glorious notes of sweet deliverance from the lips of the newly-departed soul, in a key more exalted than the rest. Oh! with what pleasure did I listen to the solemn song of one who so very lately was languishing in deep distress.

O *Veratio*, cried I, what blinded creatures are we mortals? The glories of heaven blaze all around us, and yet we perceive not in the least their illustrious splendour.

Having sung the noble anthem to distinguishing love and unfrustrable grace, they stretched their brilliant pinions, and, swift as thought, shot through the vault of heaven towards the regions of eternal felicity. As soon as they arrived in the empyrean plain, I beheld innumerable companies of the celestial hosts in their long, their glorious, and refulgent garments, with crowns of gold upon their heads, and triumphant palms in their hands, come in bright procession to the golden gates of the New Jerusalem, to congratulate the soul on her safe arrival in the glory-world, and in triumph to conduct her up to the throne of God. As they passed along through the streets of Paradise, which were all paved with diamonds and topazes, the departed *Humilius* was often saluted by his former

companions in warfare, who greatly rejoiced that his course of pilgrimage was finished, and the time of his coronation arrived. In their bright procession from the golden gates of the holy city up to the JASPER THRONE, shouts of loud joy and peals of rapturous triumph burst from each tongue, and made all the celestial arches ring in concert with their elevated voices.

I thought I saw the blessed, the ever-adorable Jesus descend from the midst of the throne, and meeting *Humilius*, embraced him with tender affection; he also called upon the excellent *Theophilus*, under whose ministry *Humilius*, it seems, had been savingly converted, and let him know that now another diamond must be added to his crown, as another of the children whom God hath given to his faithful ministry was happily arrived. Then he took *Humilius* by the hand, led him up to the all-glorious throne; and to Him, who sat in the most majestic state thereon, he said, "Most holy Father, behold this darling object of thy love and choice, this subject of redemption is safely arrived in thy more immediate and most joyous presence; being fully prepared for it by the Divine influence of the Holy Ghost. Let him now possess the mansion which hath so long been prepared for him, and enjoy the rest unto which he was predestinated."

Then He who sat on the throne, thus bespoke the soul, "Come, my beloved one, receive the joys which I have prepared for thee, and the glory unto which I appointed thee; for I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and by my special care of thee I have drawn thee to my glory."

Then the records of eternity were all laid open before him; and, now being blest with the beatific vision, he could read every line therein which related to his own state either in time or in eternity. And,

Oh, how great was the wonder of the soul! how inflamed was her gratitude, when she found every circumstance attending her pilgrimage was unalterably fixed in the decrees of God, which are so dark and difficult unto us in the church below! With holy amazement she beheld, that the whole chain of providential events flowed from, and centred in the love of God to her in the person of Christ. Silent no longer could she sit, but her wonder broke forth in rapturous songs of ceaseless praises, in concert with all the redeemed hosts, who now, in the fervour of unutterable love, struck the golden harp and sung responsive to the trembling wires.

Having followed *Humilius* thus far, *Veratio* spoke to me; and, lo! the vision was withdrawn; but left some impressions on my mind which I trust will never be erased. Being at last capable of a little reflection, after my astonishment was abated, I could not help thinking of the infinite difference betwixt those who die in the Lord, and those who die in their sins; the latter being precipitately plunged into the fearful abyss of dark and ever-burning hell, where the worm dieth not, whereas the former are immediately transported on angelic wings, from a land of sin and many sorrows, into the more immediate presence and ineffable light of the ever-blessed Three, to partake of all the joys of the undivided One. Then I said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them."

PART V.

Saints happy under Afflictions.—The Triumph of Faith.—A Christian on his Death-bed.—The Welfare of the Church to be preferred to that of our Families.—Reliance on Providence recommended.—Christ the Protector of the Father and the Widow.—Exhortation of the dying Stabilus.—Stabilus defended by the Angel Abdiel.—Abdiel's Conflict and Victory.—Death of Stabilus.—Joy of the departed Soul on its Entrance into the Presence of God.—Reflections.

As I was ruminating on these things, I thought that my guide called me away, saying, we may yet see **DEATH** attended with very different circumstances: and although I thought myself by the last scene fully repaid for all the terror I had undergone at the beginning of my acquaintance with *Veratio*; I was inspired with the most eager desire to have farther discoveries of sanctified **DEATH**. I followed him with the greatest eagerness out of this chamber, wherein I had viewed such an agreeable scene, into another apartment adjacent to it, and there he shewed me a happy disciple, who with great composure of mind was laid on a sick bed, under the pressure of heavy affliction. Calm and serene in the midst of tempestuous trouble; in the midst of trying sorrow his patience stood unmoved, even as the stately oak lifts up his lofty head, despising the western tempest; or as the stable rock, amidst the furious surges, endures their wrathful discharge without the least emotion. Rent with racking pain, and oppressed with deathly sickness, he patiently, though with a trembling voice, said, "Good is the Lord's will concerning me; the cup that my Heavenly Father hath mingled for me, shall I not patiently drink it;" I thought in my dream that he was thus addressed by one of his friends; "Sir, I would have

you repose yourself a little, for your afflictions are very heavy; and notwithstanding your spirit is submissive, your flesh must needs be weak." To which he replied, "My afflictions are all known to the Lord: yea, it is my God who has fixed the degree of them; and seeing the Almighty is pleased to do it, I dare not, I cannot complain, for I am well assured that he can do nothing wrong. Were it not right, he could not do it, omnipotent as he is. My afflictions indeed make this clay tabernacle to totter; but are lighter than nothing when put in the balance with my sins. I well know they might be infinitely greater, and yet my God be a just God. But mercy and tender compassion guides his hand even when he smites, and his bowels yearn when he mingles a bitter cup for any of his people. I am fully persuaded that he will lay no more upon me himself, nor suffer others to lay any more upon me, than he will support me under, for the Lord is very pitiful and full of mercy even to me, though I deserve nothing at his hand but to be left to lie down in sorrow; I am therefore altogether easy about the measure of my afflictions."

It was here he stopped; and one of his friends rejoined, "My dear Sir, how great is the blessing to be thus filled with comfort in the time of your sickness!" To which the sick man replied: "Indeed, my friend, my comforts are far from being so high as you imagine: on the contrary, I assure you that sensible enjoyments run very low with me at present. But this is the ground of all my confidence, 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;' he is the rock of my soul, and however my comforts flow, I account them not my Christ. Since it pleased the Lord to visit me with this affliction, which I think is drawing near to a period, I have had many struggles with my own unbelieving heart, and my conflicts with Satan, with regard to my interest in the love of Jesus

But, glory to the Almighty's name, the enemy seems to be withdrawn, my anchor is within the vail, and my hope is fixed in Immanuel. I myself am a poor helpless worm, and my faith is very tottering; but the rock of my salvation, the object of my faith, can never be shaken. With him there is no variableness, nor so much as the least shadow of a change; I may therefore boldly trust in him, and calmly wait the issue of his providence.

"After all," continued he, "I must confess that I have often been indulged with sensible manifestations of Divine love, when to my own apprehensions I stood less in need of them than at present. But, oh, let me not attempt to correct the proceedings of unerring wisdom! The Lord's ways are the best, and I desire to submit to them; he hath graciously promised that he will never leave nor forsake me, and I account him faithful who hath promised. I bless him for his word. —This is the hold into which I flee for shelter in the dark and stormy day. I would not for all the world be without an interest in the above precious promise, for I live not now by sense, but by faith, and this affliction hath found a good deal of work for the little faith I possess. Believe me, my friends, I have often been obliged, in times of darkness and difficulty, to live upon the word of grace; and it has upon the whole been spirit and life to my soul. I never knew the promise to fail; but the word on which he hath caused me to hope hath always been confirmed. I have ever found the Almighty to be as good as his word, ever better than my fears suggested, and infinitely more gracious than my deserts."

The sick man being spent with so much speaking, I thought that he was obliged to be silent for a small space to recover himself. But such was his zeal for the welfare of his friends, that as soon as possible he spake to them as follows :

“My dear brethren, in all appearance I am now near, very near, my last hour ; and I tell you, and beg that you will regard it as the words of a dying man, that the cross of Christ is of excellent use in mortifying us creature objects. Cross dispensations of Providence, bodily afflictions, and the temptations of Satan, are such excellent corrosives, that, by the direction and influence of God the Spirit, they prove the destruction of sin in our members. For my own part I declare to you all, that I have learned more of God by afflictions, than by all the sermons that I have ever heard preached.”

It was now that *Veratio* whispered thus to me ; I well believe, *Novitio*, what this good man says of his afflictions ; for as the fervent fire is to the golden ore, and water is to the sullied linen, so are afflictions in the hand of the Spirit of God, to those who are exercised with them. Parricide is lawful in no case else but this : here it is a righteous thing, that afflictions, which are the legitimate offspring of sin, should first curb the power, and at last destroy the being of their accursed parent. And for our comfort, let us know that afflictions themselves cannot survive the sin which they instrumentally destroy.

In the mean while the dying man continued and said, “My dear friends, despise not the chastening of the Lord ; resist not affliction with a foolish Pagan bravery ; neither murmur, repine, nor faint, when you are rebuked by him ; for he chastiseth not in anger, neither doth he rebuke in hot displeasure. If you are the objects of Divine love, you must expect the application of the rod : for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If you are the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, you must expect in this life to bear the cross, for it is always antecedent to the crown. Without afflictions you do not, you cannot, bear the image of the heavenly

JESUS, for he was afflicted; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. They greatly mistake who hope for Christ here, without afflictions along with him. Our passover is never to be eaten in this world without bitter herbs; therefore that religion which is unconnected with the cross is not the religion of Christ, but of the world. Be you assured, my friends, that the way in which no cross is found must needs be the broad and downward way; for the cross of Christ is the right, the only path-way to the kingdom; and those who despise and reject the cross will find themselves at death deprived of the crown." Here he stopped again, his strength being exhausted; and his silent friends stood with a mournful pleasure around his bed.

After some time, one of them made so free as to ask him, whether he would choose to live or die, on supposition that the Almighty would grant his desire? To which, being a little refreshed, he replied: "Indeed, my friend, I cannot tell you; for so far as I know my own heart, which hath all along been a mystery to me, I neither desire life nor death: for me to live is Christ, and for to die is eternal gain. I know that the Almighty hath numbered my days, and my months are with him: he hath fixed the limits both of my time and my habitation, so that I cannot pass over them; yea, he hath by an immutable decree appointed the very moment and means of my dissolution. Why then should I anxiously think, or care any thing at all about the matter? His purposes are for ever the same, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations. His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. If I am appointed to death, as I think I am, I trust he will glorify himself in my death; and if it should be that I am appointed to life, he hath wisdom and power sufficient to glorify himself even by my living. I yield myself wholly to his disposal, for

the Judge of all the earth can never do wrong; living and dying may God be glorified in me."

Here he ceased, and his friend with visible sympathy rejoined: "Happy, my dear brother, it is for you to be thus indulged with strength from on high, in the time of your great distress. But tell me, my friend, if your strength will permit, do tell me, if you have no desire to live and see your wife and children comfortably provided for? Methinks it is a desirable thing to see our children educated in a religious manner, and settled agreeably in the world. These things often lie with a distressing weight upon my mind, and are ties which strongly bind me down to earth, and from which I sincerely desire to be delivered."

The sick man replied: "My dear friend, I must confess to you, that, next to the welfare of the Redeemer's Church, my wife and children are dear to me,* and if any thing could now prevail with me to desire a longer sojournment in this valley of sorrows, it would be the welfare of my dear children, and dearer wife, for they have always been dear to me ever since I enjoyed them. Consulting their welfare hath formerly been attended with great anxiety; but now I

* These words of *Stabilus*, "Next to the welfare of the Redeemer's Church, my wife and children are dear to me," are very remarkable, and ought to be regarded. That he loved his wife and children is evident from what he says both in this place and elsewhere; but, however fervent his affection for them might be, it gave place to the love he bore to the Redeemer's church. This evidences the true spirit of Christianity in him, and serves as much to fix his character, as the exalted exercise of his faith; being expressive of the very spirit of that text, Matt. x. 37. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." of this is to be regarded as a rule, it will fix an everlasting stigma upon those professors who are so full of care for themselves and families, that they have neither leisure nor inclination to care for the church of God. These are like withered limbs in the common body; they neither impart nor receive nourishment; neither are their death-beds likely to be honoured, as that of the good *Stabilus*.

see, that in my over carefulness I was far from being submissive to the sovereign pleasure of an all-disposing God; and, as far as lay within my power, was for wresting the dispensations of providence out of his unerring hand. Had I done what I could to promote their welfare, and left the issue to the Almighty, I had done well: but, alas! I could not be easy, unless I evidently saw the issue answer my desire. But blessed for ever be that God who turneth our hearts as he does the rivers of water: at present all anxiety appears to be gone, and my wife and children are no burden at all to my mind; for I know that the God whom I serve will convert the stones of the wall into bread, before he will suffer the seed of the righteous to famish.*

“Settling my children in the world appeared a very desirable thing before I came to a death-bed, but now I am taught that their settling in the world does not in the least depend on my being present with them; for the determination of Jehovah hath long since divinely gone forth by a firm and unalterable decree, in which all their circumstances, great and minute, are infallibly settled, by the unerring wisdom of Him who worketh all things after no other counsel but that of his own will. The life of the sparrow and the dinner of the raven are provided for in his grand decree; yea, the very hairs on our bodies are numbered, coloured, and disposed by unerring wisdom; much more are the bounds of our habitation, and the extent of our possessions, the result of divine appointment. If the Lord is pleased to make my children poor (as it is his prerogative to make poor) how shall my presence with them be able to make them rich? or if he in his

* An illustrious instance of Divine regard to the seed of the righteous, and care of the widow and fatherless, we have in the provisions made for the numerous family of a worthy minister, the Rev Mr. Burford, lately deceased

sovereign bounty shall be pleased to exalt and make them rich, what circumstances so pernicious as to prevent the execution of his design? Holy and reverend is his name; he disposeth of all creatures and things as his wisdom doth direct. By his determination kings reign, and princes decree justice. Races and battles are under his direction; yea, the very turning up of the lot is determined by Jehovah; much more the station and circumstances of his people, and their children. Why then should I desire to interfere in the matter of settling them, to the disquieting of my own mind; for God both can and will bring his purposes to pass without any instrumentality, if he is pleased to take me to himself?

“Their education in religious principles hath been by far the most tender point with me, well knowing the influence which a godly education often has upon the conduct of youth: but this also I am enabled to leave with the Lord. Not from any indifferency toward them, so as to be careless about their welfare in time or eternity: but I have ever been so sensible of my deficiency, in regard to paternal duty, that I often fear my children have been more injured by my imperfections, than profited by my precepts and instructions. Besides, I am fully persuaded that God will be at no loss for an instrument, when he is about to teach them the knowledge of himself.

“Be assured, my friends, that children are not brought one hour sooner to the knowledge of God, on account of their parents’ lives being preserved; but many have, by their parents’ death, been brought into circumstances by which the Lord has been pleased to lead them into the knowledge of themselves, and the secret of his own immutable love to their persons. Therefore I commit my tender offspring to the protection and grace of Him, who has designed to become the father of the fatherless, and who hath said to men

in my condition, 'Leave your fatherless children and your widows to me;' I trust his word, and believe, that of all guardians he is the **most** disinterested. My dear *Honora*, my beloved spouse, always hath been dear to me, ever since it pleased the Lord, by his holy ordinance, to make us one; but although she is so dear to me, as that we seemed to possess but one soul, I can with pleasure leave her a few days behind me in this world, notwithstanding it is, and she finds it to be, a world of sin and sorrow. I know that she is an elect vessel, a daughter of faithful Abraham, and an heiress, according to the promise; and, as such, she is under Divine protection, and cannot miscarry. Fear not, my dear *Honora*, fear not the safety of your passage through life. I know that this world is a land of snares, and a hell of pain and sorrow, when compared with the haven of pure felicity, to which we are bound. It is, and, my dear, you know it to be, a land inhabited with implacable enemies to the heaven-born pilgrims, who are passing through it; but let not this discourage my *Honora*, for "he who saved your soul from DEATH, will also preserve your feet from falling." He who hath loved you with an everlasting love will bear you through all difficulties and dangers, and make you more than conqueror. It is your God, my love—your husband and friend, who reigns supreme over all creation, who holds the reins of government in his own almighty hand, and thereby curbeth the enemies of his people at pleasure; so that the most potent of them all cannot lift up his hand against a child of God without his Divine permission. He never grants a permission to any of them without a proper limitation; 'Hitherto thou mayest come,' is the permission; 'but thou shalt go no farther,' is the restraint; even as Satan obtained leave to destroy every thing which belonged to pious Job; but was prohibited touching his life. Thus it is, that the feeblest of the

Redeemer's flock dwell secure from real danger beneath the covert of divine protection.

“My dear *Honora*, our great Lord is a husband to the widow; he is a wise director, a rich provider, a powerful protector; and as such he is yours: yours in the strongest obligations: yours in time, and to all eternity. The confidence I have in these things makes me willingly resign the wife of my bosom, and my tender offspring, to the will of that beneficent Being, who hath a sovereign right to dispose of me and mine, as he shall see most to his own glory.

“My dear friends and fellow travellers, beware of immoderate care: for you may greatly injure, but never can you thereby profit, your children at all. Think not that their settlement in the world depends either less or more upon you: for when you have cared your last for them, the Sovereign Ruler will dispose just as he sees meet, without so much as once consulting you in the matter. Ah, my brethren, when you lie, as I do now, on a death-bed, you will see, that all immoderate carefulness springs immediately from ignorance of, and enmity against the ways of a holy God. Alas! how many Christian people are woefully perplexed with fruitless care all the days of their lives, and are thereby prevented of that usefulness, which they might otherwise be of, to the church of Christ! Believe me, the best thing you can do for your children, is solemnly and seriously to dedicate them unto God, leaving them and all their concerns at his disposal. If you do this in good earnest, by an habitual act, both you and they will reap the advantage of it: yours will be the peace, and theirs will be the profit. Remember what young Samuel got by his early dedication.”

He ceased here, his strength being exhausted; and after some time one of his friends thus addressed him: “Dear Sir, I cannot persuade myself but a mind thus

stayed on the Lord must be filled with the most joyous transport."

To which the good man replied, "My mind is composed, and calmly fixed on the unalterable word of an ever faithful God. My peace is settled, though my joys are far from being elevated. It is not on inward frames and feelings that my hope is stayed, but on the promises of the everlasting covenant, which are, in Christ, yea and amen to every believer. Inward feelings are indeed extremely pleasant: but I have not dared for many years to trust them, for at best I have found them fleeting and transitory: now enjoyed; dead anon! now like the full-blown rose my comforts have flourished; immediately stripped of all their beauty like the winter vine. Whilst I lived upon my frames, I was all upon extremes; either ravished on the mount of enjoyment, or gone down to do business in the deep waters. One hour I said, 'My mountain stands sure, I shall never be moved:' perhaps in less than another, I supposed myself, like Peter, sinking into the bosom of a fatal billow. No solidity could I ever find in the frames and dispositions of my own heart; but I never found the promise to fail, nor the Lord to depart from the word he hath spoken. In all his trials his immutable word hath been my stay, and on it alone will I lean, when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. And thus, and quietly resting on his word, he will finish the salvation of my soul.

"Indeed, if the Lord should be pleased to indulge me now with the sensible comforts of his felt love, shed abroad in my heart by his Holy Spirit; it would make this lonesome valley, into which I am entering by far more delightful, and my passage through it abundantly less thorny. But if, in his wisdom, he should see meet to withhold from me such a desirable

measure of sensible manifestation, I bless him for his unalterable word, and I bless him for strength to rely upon it.

“My dear brethren, beware of making to yourself a Christ of the dying comforts with which your holy Redeemer is pleased occasionally to indulge you. Remember, that if his tender concern for your peace and pleasure induce him to privilege you with the sheddings abroad of his love in your heart, the same tenderness of you will induce him to withdraw his comforter, when he sees himself supplanted, and you live upon those comforts rather than upon his person, grace, and righteousness. Remember always that salvation, and the comforts thereof, are two very different things; the fulness of the former being often possessed, where there is but a very small degree of the latter. In my early days of grace I was generally wont to frame to myself notions of the love of God, according to the glimmering twilight of my own mind, and the good or evil frame I found myself to be in: but through rich grace, and amazing mercy, I have been taught rather to judge thereof by the written word of God, by which I have been piloted through seas of difficulty, when darker sensations have lost sight of shore. And I trust the Holy Ghost will guide me by the said written word, till in his good time he is pleased to land me on the glory-shore, and bring me into the more immediate presence of the great *Three in One*.”

This said, he remained silent for a considerable time; and the venerable *Veratio* turned himself to me, and thus accosted me. Now, *Novitio*, you behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. This is the good *Stabilius*, a Christian of the right kind; one who may be called a father in Israel; he can well distinguish between husk and kernel, shadow and substance, truth and error, a faithful one in the household of God. His holy soul can feed upon nothing but

what is spiritual and divine; such bread, and such only, as descended from God out of heaven, is pleasant to his taste. In his life-time, which hath been an uninterrupted succession of corroding sorrows, the good *Stabilius* could live as well and as satisfactorily upon a word of promise as some others could do upon five hundred a year. Thus in his life-time he was so happy as to live by faith in the promises, and now he is dying, he is still the same. The word of the Lord is his comfort and stay. But although his unbelief appears now to be banished from him, I can tell you it was not always so; for the time was, when, under dark dispensations of Providence, he complained with Jacob that all those things were making against him, though now he is better informed. Yea, whatever infidelity we can find in Job, David, Asaph, one part or other of the life of good *Stabilius* hath furnished him with a sad remembrance of theirs; though upon the whole his faith hath prevailed gloriously; and I imagine he will never more feel an impulse from unbelief.

Now, *Novitio*, I have a mind to unfold an amazing scene to you; such a scene as you have never before surveyed. Then he touched my eyes with an eye-salve of divine preparation, and instantly I saw what was extremely amazing. I saw a numerous troop of restless infernals beleaguering the bed of the sick man, which was well defended by a brilliant minister of heaven, divinely superb in his immaterial array. Clothed with impenetrable armour, the martial guardian waved a flaming sword, with which he kept all the furies of the pit at a proper distance; so that although the most implacable hatred and rage glowed in every breast, they were not able to come near to disturb the mind of *Stabilius*. Sometimes they tripped their tongues with falsehood, and accused him of the most abominable crimes to the guardian, who with holy contempt disregarded all their clamours. Repulsed

In this, they turn their accusings into the most fervent intreaties to the angel, that he would scabbard his sword for a season, and allow them the pleasure of distracting the dying man. But the benevolent protector, firm as a rock, remained inflexible to their intreaties, and deaf to their accusations, resolving, in obedience to the will of his God, to defend his charge to the last extremity. Being thus repulsed, even hell itself became hotter within them; and, irritated with fierce revenge, they rushed in fearful numbers against the heavenly sentinel. Thick as atoms in the sunbeams, their hissing arrows were shot against him and his beloved charge; but, skilled in martial encounters, he received their charge, and quenched their fiery darts with his shield, with which he also covered *Stabilus*. With his brandished falchion, which emitted streams of fire as he waved it, he made the infernal tribe to give back; but filled with indignation, and fired with revenge, they instantly rallied their broken force, and returned resolvedly to the charge; and I had the pleasure of observing, that as often as they rallied, the heavenly Chieftain put them to the flight. Being indulged with a view of this angelic war, I thought of an ancient saying, "The angel of the Lord encamps round about those that fear him;"* and, turning to

* "The angel of the Lord encamps round about those that fear him." There is a surprising beauty in these words of the Psalmist; as expressive of the highest safety which the most timorous heart can wish for. He encamps, with a view to continue in this station—It is around them, rather than beside them. Beside them would have argued great safety; but encamping around implies infinitely more, because every passage is guarded, and no way left for the enemy to give the attack with advantage. Encamps around them, when dangers are most ripe, and humanity is most inactive and off its guard.—"Around those that fear him;" rather thus expressed in condescension to our unbelieving weakness; the believer being sometimes conscious that he fears God when he dares not conclude that he loves him.—That no room may be left for unbelief to found its arguments upon, the potency of the illustrious protector is pointed out in his character as the angel of the LORD.

my guide, I said, O Sir, it was well said of that Hebrew prince, who spent his youth in rural employments, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Ah, Sir! they are well kept whom the Lord doth keep, and the man is blessed whom he thus preserveth. To which *Veratio* replied, Now, *Novitio*, you have had a sight of faithful *Abdiel*, so justly celebrated by the famous Milton, for his constant and firm adherence to Immanuel, even when left alone in the camp of rebellious seraphim. There it was,

"That among the faithless, faithful only he,
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, uneduc'd, untterrifi'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought;
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd."

Thus, *Novitio*, this faithful guardian nobly retreated from the tents of rebellion, and ere long returned commissioned with the rest of the celestial hosts, to fight with the perfidious miscreants, in the quarrel of the Most High, and there he discovered at once his zeal for his God, and the prowess of his own martial arm: for when,

"—————Before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
Satan with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold:
Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
Amongst the mightiest, bent on highest deeds.
—————But from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd.

“ Proud art thou met? thy hope was to have reach’d
 The height of thine aspiring unoppos’d,
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandon’d at the terror of thy power
 Or potent tongue :

—————But thou seest

All are not of thy train; there be who faith
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then
 To thee not visible, when I alone
 Seem’d in thy world erroneous to dissent
 From all my sect, thou seest: now learn too late
 How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.”

It was thus fervent *Abdiel* accosted the Prince of rebels, when they met between the opposing fronts of the angelic armies, on that awful day on which all the hosts of heaven and hell were drawn forth to battle on the (till then) unstained field of Æther. And,

“ The grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
 Thus answered the faithful *Abdiel* ;
 —————‘ Ill for thee, but in wish’d hour
 Of my revenge, first sought, for thou return’st
 From flight, seditious angel, to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first essay
 Of this right hand provok’d, since first that tongue,
 Inspir’d with contradiction, durst oppose,
 A third part of the Gods, in synod met,
 Their deities to assert.

—————But well thou com’st

Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
 From me some plume, that thy success may shew
 Destruction to the rest.

“ At first I thought that liberty and heav’n
 To heav’nly souls had been all one; but now
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve
 Ministering spirits, train’d up in feast and song;
 Such hast thou arm’d the minstrelsy of heav’n,
 Servility with freedom to contend.
 As both their deeds compar’d this day shall prove.”

“ To whom in brief thus *Abdiel* stern reply’d,
 ‘ Apostate, still thou err’st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
 Unjustly thou deprav’st it with the name

Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
 Or nature ; God and nature bid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs.
 Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom ; let me serve
 In heaven God ever blest, and his divine
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd ;
 Yet chains in hell, nor realms expect ; mean while
 From me return'd, as erst thou said'st, from flight,
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.'

" So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
 Such ruin intercept : ten paces huge
 He back recoil'd ; the tenth on bended knee
 His massy spear upstay'd."

According to the matchless Milton, the faithful *Abdiel* first asserted the sovereign right of his God both by word and deed ; and thus he hath continued an invincible hero in the cause of his master, a willing and faithful guardian of his militant children, as you have just now seen in the conflict betwixt him and the infernal brotherhood.

I thought in my dream that I thus replied ; I thank you most heartily, my dear, my venerable *Veratio*, for this discovery, so strange and surprising in itself ; and I thank you most gratefully, dear Sir, for this opportunity of seeing the value of this celebrated angel. But, worthy *Veratio*, whose delight appears to be to instruct the ignorant, I pray you, deign to inform me, if it is possible that such a war may be maintained around a Christian, and the party himself, for whom the strife is, remain unacquainted with it ? To which I thought he replied ; You may be at no loss, *Novitio*, to know that the best of Christians, even fathers in the Redeemer's family, see and know only in part ; therefore there may be many things of this kind transacted among the immaterial inhabitants of the spiritual

world, without their knowledge. Every Christian may certainly be informed by the volume of revelation in general, that all the angels of God are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who are appointed heirs of salvation; nevertheless there are many offices of kindness performed by those benevolent spirits in behalf of the saints, which the most intelligent Christians remain utterly ignorant of, whilst they sojourn in this land of separation and sorrow. As we may see in the case of good *Stabilus*: he perfectly knows that God is the prime efficient of all his peace and composure of mind; but he doth not know that there is a martial seraph appointed by the Sovereign of heaven as the guardian of his bed, and protector of his dying moments; nor is he in the least apprehensive that there is such a swarm of reprobate spirits so near, and so earnestly seeking the distraction of his mind.

“If the militant members of the chosen church could really see their shining attendants, and understand all the ways of the Lord perfectly, they would enjoy the heavenly glories before the appointed time: but the fulness of joy, and the manifest glories of the redeemed, are reserved for eternity, therefore not to be expected in time. On this account many of the Lord’s works are done in the dark, and his ways are involved in thick clouds: so that poor purblind mortals cannot discern them before they enjoy the light of eternity. And you yourself, *Novitio*, may know that the conflicts betwixt our benevolent protectors, the guardian angels, and our enemies of the reprobate race, are not to be seen with bodily eyes, but with the more refined rays of the mind. Bodily eyes discern corporeal objects, but spiritual sight alone can discern spirit.

I thought in my dream, that towards the dissolution of *Stabilus* I beheld a squadron of armed seraphs, who were dispatched from the armies in the skies to

assist *Abdiel* in the protection of this chosen disciple ; who, as soon as arrived, and fraternal salutation passed after the angelic manner, they told him that Jehovah having, from the throne of his holiness, seen that great numbers of the enemies had assaulted him and his charge, had sent them to his assistance. *Abdiel* thus replied : “ Welcome, my spotless brethren ; welcome are ye now to me, for I have been vigorously attacked, and still the daring infernals are resolute ; but through the strength of my God I have preserved my charge inviolate. Come, my brethren, let us prepare for immediate action, for the enemies, though frequently repulsed, being now afresh recruited from hell, are rallying their utmost force, and soon will return intrepidly to the charge.” This said, I perceived those ever-armed seraphs each of them drew his flaming sword, fixed his shield, and planted themselves around the bed of the good *Stabilus*, every hero putting himself in a posture of defence, saying with united voice, “ It is the good will of our Lord that his chosen ones should be preserved.”—Happy man, said I, who art thus defended ! I thought in my dream that, after all this was done, the good *Stabilus*, as if he had received fresh vigour at the arrival of the celestial visitants, opened his mouth, and most fervently expressed himself in the following manner : “ I know that he is God, and that he is my God. He hath guided me from my conception to this my dying day : all his judgments towards me have been mingled with mercy, and holy and reverend is his name, and all mercies have been mixed less or more with judgment. I will therefore, with the royal Hebrew, sing of mercy and of judgment ; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing. A chain of well-concerted and blessed providences laid hold of me at my conception, and till now hath led me in such a manner that all hath been for good ; and now, my friends, it is with amazement I see both the

ends of the chain unalterably fixed in the eternal throne. It cometh from or centreth in the Father's everlasting love to me, in the person of Jesus, unworthy as I am; and, oh! let God, even God in the person of the Redeemer, be owned and glorified with my last, my departing breath. Hear me, my fellow Christians, for I speak now within the immediate views of eternity, and DEATH even now oppresseth my weary lungs. Behold, I go the way of all mankind: but I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and although after my skin worms destroy, as they certainly will, this body of mine, yet in the flesh, even in this flesh, now almost consumed, I shall see God; yea I shall see him for myself, and not for another; not at a distance, but near, though my reins be consumed within me. I shall see him on that momentous and much desired day on which I shall, in my whole person, be made like unto himself." These words were expressed even in the arms of DEATH, so that he was quite spent with speaking, and lay in a profound silence for a minute or two; then in holy triumph, with a countenance that displayed a sense of conquest, he said, "Lord Jesus, come quickly: into thy hands I commend my spirit." These were his last words, and a few minutes after he quietly yielded up the ghost, and slept in Jesus.

In the mean while *Veratio* addressed himself to me as follows:—This, *Novitio*, is Christian fortitude, distinct from the ancient pagan bravery of the Romans. If you see a Brutus or Cassius, or even a Cato himself, out-brave the fears of DEATH, it is from ignorance of the real nature and state of an *HEREAFTER*; but it is clear knowledge of eternity, and of the perfections of God, which fortifies the mind of *Stabilis* against every painful apprehension, now he is making his *exit*

from the stage of time, and struggling hand to hand with the quencher of the animal flame.

Mind the tender *Honora*; mark how she stands with a mournful pleasure by the bed of her dying partner, hers but a very few moments longer. Two things oppress her with sensible concern, and two things inspire her labouring bosom with holy joy. She is most sensible of the awful dispensation which lays her under a multiplicity of cares! and, oh! her dear, her much esteemed *Stabilinus*, the pain which he endures in his departing moments becomes hers by sympathy. As she supports his head, and tenderly wipes the cold sweat from his brow, every sigh of his, every symptom of pain, cuts its way directly through her sympathetic heart; she dreads the parting with him, yet longs for the dissolving moment. Souls thus knit by holy matrimony, and thus made one by sympathy, feel in parting such rending and tearing of the sensitive faculties, as neither tongue nor pen can describe. But in the midst of her sorrows two things support the amiable *Honora*, namely, the consideration that these departing agonies put a period to every grief, a final period to every sorrow of her dear, her much valued husband. And she hopes upon solid and scriptural grounds, she hopes that in a little time she herself will be in mercy taken to the celestial world, where she shall again receive with unspeakable joy the pure and spiritual caresses of her glorified husband, where they shall spend a vast and endless eternity together, in the transporting pleasures of Paradise, and mutually join in celebrating the praises of their common God and Saviour. Thus she mourns, and reason says she should; but religion teaches her to mourn as one that is not without hope.

The dissolving moment come, the watchful internals took wing and fled, leaving the soul for ever to the

blessed possession of uninterrupted peace : she ascended triumphant ; and, wrapt in extatic wonder sat for a season on the clayey lips of her beloved mate, gazing on the splendour of the messenger of heaven, notwithstanding she herself shone more gloriously than all her attendants ; who, free from envy, joyfully saluted her with "Peace be unto thee," and fondly congratulated her on her safe arrival on the confines of eternity.

By this time I thought I saw an innumerable company of seraphic *flames*, all of them shining in the perfection of glory, who as the former came at the will of Immanuel, to congratulate the soul on her passage through the wilderness of tears, and the gloomy valley of the shadow of DEATH, and her safe arrival in Immanuel's country : then gave her their united welcome to their resplendent society. I cannot now, ah ! I cannot describe the joys of the glory-born soul, when she first perceived herself invested with the radiance of heaven, and sensibly pressed to the fervent bosom of everlasting love ; for her admiration was inexpressible. But my benevolent guide, the good *Veratio*, now becoming an interpreter, with no small difficulty I gathered up some few of her rapturous expressions, which but for his assistance I could not have done. for she spoke in the celestial tongue, which is a language that I had never learned : and so imperfect is the fragment which I collected, when compared with the original, that I redden with shame, and my heart flutters with fear, to expose it to view, lest I should thereby injure the subject, and eclipse the glory which I would gladly (the Lord knows) recommend to human esteem. But, encouraged by the confession of an incomparable Paul, "here we see darkly and but in part," I will venture to write it, though it is, as it were, with fear and trembling.

No sooner was the happy soul disentangled from

mortality, but she was filled with the fulness of the glory of God, and, in the highest elevations of transport, cried out with a voice of the most perfect melody:

“Is this the resting-place, to which the weary pilgrims are brought after a moment’s trouble below? Glorious rest! I have often heard, I have often longed, for the possession of thee when tossed with the tempest of life: Happy I! Blessed peace! Uninterrupted joy and permanent rest! Hallelujah! Let all the empyrean hosts, let all the militant church incessantly praise, in the highest strain, the eternal and bounteous Provider of this glorious rest, in which all our labour and sorrow shall eternally cease! Is this the heaven I have so often heard preached? This glorious place! O heaven! How often have I heard of thy divine excellences when sojourning in the world below! But now I behold thy refulgent glories without an interposing cloud; and, lo! the thousandth part of thy beauties was never disclosed. Happy are thine inhabitants, thou imperial city, for the Great King is in the midst of thee; his uncreated glories irradiate every corner of thy blissful streets. Blessed and unsullied mansions of the disembodied spirits of the just! Happy I, who was predestinated to the possession of this divine inheritance! Is this the Saviour whom I formerly denied? Ever, till the day of unfrustrable grace, did I say unto thee, thou adorable Lord, I will not have *thee* to reign over me. And, O my Lord, am I now at last blessed with the immediate vision of thee? Thou, Sharon, rose divine! Thy beauties, Lord, how amiable! O how transcendently great are thine excellent glories! Eternal and all-conquering Saviour, I am now at last ravished with thy superabundant goodness, which on earth I could scarcely with coolness admire, but now I behold thee to be all excellent and divine. Is this the crown? The end of all my former crosses? Massy treasure! Glorious lustre!

How striking is the stupendous blaze! In the world below my eyes were dreadfully obscure; but now I behold all the excellences of Godhead. All the radiant beams of unclouded divinity in their fullest resplendency shining forth in thine immaculate person, thou adorable Jesus! Blessed thou! Happy I! Blessed afflictions, which in thy all powerful hand, thou Eternal Spirit, have fitted me for those unsulliable mansions of uninterrupted felicity!

“Sin and DEATH, where are ye now? trampled for ever beneath my victorious feet. Adorable Saviour, the conquest is thine. Ye tempting fiends, the promised time is now come that I scorn for ever your envious rage. No more, ye malignant infernals, shall your cruel buffetings be able to shake the tranquillity of this peaceable and glorified mind. Nor shall your spear-like tongues, ye sons of violence and deceit, ever more be able to tarnish my conduct with blame. Ye children of perfidy, ye treacherous persecutors of the gracious church, the gulf is fixed, and here you can never come a second time to perplex me with sorrow: nor shall the tumultuous rage of fiery lusts and impetuous passions, ever more be able to separate betwixt my best beloved and me.

“I am now secure within thine insurmountable walls, O thou blessed Jerusalem! Overwhelmed with the insupportable blaze of delighted divinity: here let me bask for ever, though the bliss is unsufferable. Already filled with the fulness of manifested and imparted love, let me drink for ever at the fountain of life. Ever, for ever, my God, will I praise thee; incessantly praise thee whilst eternity endures. Grace and providence, providence and grace, shall fill up the measure of mine eternally delightful song. This is my employment; this is the task prescribed by the sweet obligations of gratitude.”

Having gathered up this most imperfect fragment of

what I heard, I thought that the scene was drawn, and the vision departed from me ; and I, astonished at what I had heard and seen, turned to my guide, and in transport said, “ No wonder, Sir, if Balaam, who saw the visions of the Almighty, desired to die the death of the righteous, and to enjoy such a latter end as theirs. No wonder if Judas, the traitor, despaired and hanged himself, after having betrayed such a glorious Saviour as this. Ah ! *Veratio*, my good *Veratio*, may I enjoy the divine favour whatever else I may lack ! May I endure all sorrow which both earth and hell can inflict, rather than miss of the glory which shall be revealed ! Fall short of heaven ! Oh ! I tremble at the thought ! Fall short of heaven ! if I should, I should be of all creatures the most emphatically wretched and miserable. To love, to see, and not enjoy, ah ! what intolerable anguish would it give ! If it depended less or more on works of my performing, I could not avoid falling short. But it is of grace, all of grace, of nothing but grace, and so let grace have the glory for ever secure. Yet, oh ! let me not deceive myself in a matter of such grand importance ; but, raw and unexperienced as I am, I think I have something of the same hope which the good *Stabilis* expressed ; and oh, *Veratio*, may my latter end be like his ! ”

PART VI.

Presumption of *Novitio*.—He is introduced into the Presence of the dying *Fidelia*.—Her Resignation.—Worldly Possessions the Root of all Evil.—The Promises of God fulfilled.—Death rendered pleasant by the Presence of Christ.—Exhortation of the dying *Fidelia*.—Her Character.—Her triumphant Death.—Conclusion.

HERE my guide addressed me, and said, Now, *Novitio*, you have seen something of DEATH transformed into life, and it is glorious in your esteem; but if you will follow me, we may yet make farther discoveries relating to the departure of the sanctified. By this time my curiosity was stretched to the utmost pitch; therefore I needed but little persuasion to attend to farther discoveries, seeing the departure of *Humilius* and *Stabilius* was so very agreeable at least to myself; therefore I said to my guide, Lead, *Veratio*, lead wherever you will, and I will follow you.

Are you sure of that? replied *Veratio*; perhaps you may be mistaken; a much stronger person than *Novitio* appears to be, hath deserted me before now, and the strongest have found it difficult enough to adhere to me at certain times. Pardon me, Sir, replied I, I mean whilst you unfold such agreeable scenes; for I perceive, Sir, their influence is attractive. Well, *Novitio*, replied he, I agree with you in that, for when you are strongly drawn, I do not doubt but you will run apace. However, at present let us attend to the matter in hand.

Accordingly he led me away from this to another, but mean, apartment; and as we entered, he said, Now, *Novitio*, prepare yourself for seeing the wondrous works of the Almighty. I admired what miracle I was now to behold, but ere long I beheld a miracle of

grace; a poor woman and three small children were the humble inhabitants of this despicable hut; as I learned from my guide, the poor but tender mother, whose name was *Fidelia*, had been confined to her bed by a deathly disorder for the space of six weeks or upwards, and by this time she seemed almost conquered by the fatal enemy to nature, though she still retained the perfect use of her reason, and still was capable of speaking to her visitants. At the time of our going into her mean apartment some few of her friendly acquaintance, some of them mean, others of them better attired, were come to visit her, desirous to perform the best offices of Christian friendship, expecting that her departure from earth was at hand. One of them who stood by her bed-side spoke to her thus: "My dear friend *Fidelia*, I see your body is very low, and in all appearance the hour of your departure is approaching near; but if strength will permit, I should be glad to know how it is with you in your soul; for I have sometimes known the soul to be most healthful and vigorous when the outward man has been in the very arms of DEATH." To whom I thought *Fidelia* replied; "O my friend! we have a kind and compassionate Lord; his comforts to me, a poor unworthy creature, are neither few nor small. I may well say he feedeth me with his grace, and all his paths drop fatness to me. O my friends! my root is in the best soil; and the dew lies all night upon my branches. Oh, let me ever be thankful for that sweet and transporting day on which I found freedom of soul to rely upon Christ alone for salvation, as he is held forth in the gospel! Blessed be God for freedom to call the Redeemer my own, and to look up to him in an appropriating way! O the sweetness of the remembrance of it! It bears me down with the delightful weight of humiliating love; electing, edeeming, and regenerated love commended itself by

the sweetest and most persuasive eloquence unto my heart, and still it is the more endearing, because of its discriminating nature. Oh, it is unspeakable! O the heights and depths! O divine love! Why is it that I, a poor unworthy hell-deserving sinner, should be found thy favourite object? Amazing and miraculous grace! that ever the great salvation of the adorable Jesus hath laid hold on me, and preached itself into my very heart, notwithstanding I am the basest of all the human creation. Behold, I see the wise, the moral, the rich, and the noble, standing at a distance from the great salvation, and strangers to the pardoning mercy of God, whilst I, the most unworthy of all, am fed with the comforts of his love. It is thy doing, O thou omnipotent Saviour, and it is marvellous in my eyes! Thou lovest merely because thou wilt love, and pardonest only because such is thy good pleasure."

After some time her friend addressed himself to her as follows: "I perceive, *Fidelia*, and I am glad to see it, that you do not quarrel with the providence of God, because he hath given you but a scanty measure of worldly substance; you do not seem offended because you are poor, and have not fortunes to leave your children."

"No, my friend," replied she, "I am not angry, for the Lord doth all things well, and my lot hath been rightly and wisely determined; I would not on any account that it had been otherwise than it has been. Whatever beauty others may think there is in growing riches, I must tell you, for my own part that I would not for the world I had been born to be rich, for wherever they come, riches are sure to be a burden to the professor: therefore he who well understood the nature of things, says, 'He that increaseth in them doth also increase in sorrow.' I have always found my own corruptions to be burden enough for me to

bear up the hill towards Mount Zion, without a weight of thick clay, however brilliant, on my shoulders."

Here my guide gently jogged me, and said, This is most excellently judged of *Fidelia*; for as weights of lead are to the courser, when he runs for the plate, so is gold to the followers of Christ. It is very difficult to possess gold without loving it, and you may know "that the love of money is the root of all evil;" insomuch that it is next to impossible for a rich man to be a true and humble Christian.*

In the mean while, *Fidelia* continued, and said, "Had I been full, I might with many others have forgotten my God; but my narrow circumstances have furnished me with many precious opportunities of beholding the goodness of his providence, and faithfulness to his promise; which opportunities I had certainly lost had I been rich. I think I see such beauty in the unerring dispensations of Providence towards me, that no way so suitable could have been chosen, as the very way which my gracious God hath taken to bring me to himself and his glory. Well may I cry out with the apostle, 'O the depth and riches both of his wisdom and knowledge.'"

Filled with admiration at the goodness of God, *Fidelia* stopped here, and *Veratio* said to me, It has been, *Novitio*, the error of many writers, and still more of readers, to suppose, that small entertainment,

* Within the few years that I have been a professor, I have known many useful members of gospel churches utterly spoiled by getting rich. From spiritual, savoury, and sociable brethren, they have dwindled into mere formalists and muck-worms, barren fig-trees in the garden of God, and such they are likely to continue till it is the pleasure of God to revive them again. Many you will find convinced of this doctrine in their judgment, whose affections are altogether unmoved: therefore they compass sea and land to get money, notwithstanding they have the greatest reason to believe that it will add to their trouble. Yea, although they have many stings of conscience on this account, still they will do what they can to increase it. How absurd is man

and but few profitable hints, are to be drawn from a state of low life; but if we will make true religion our theme, where must we go to find it? If we enquire at the palace of his Grace *Elatus*, there we see all the pomp of magnificent pride driving on in its lofty career; or if we call at the seat of my Lord *Ganeo*, we are immediately confronted by drunkenness and revelling; and the delicate board, though covered with the most tasteful viands, is altogether destitute of that religion which would prevent it becoming a snare to the owner. It is much more likely, that if in quest of real religion, you will find her with wretched Lazarus at the gate, rather than within the hotel of Dives; for not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble, are called to the possession of true religion, but the poor have the gospel preached to them; and amongst the lower class of people religion dwells in its greatest power, as you may see in the case of *Fidelia*, whose mind is overwhelmed with holy joy, even in the midst of her extreme sufferings.

It was now, I thought, that one of her friends asked her how it was with her, as to the comforts of life? To which she replied, "O my friends, I have all things and abound: our gracious God hath promised that our bread shall be given and our water shall be sure: and to the praise of his Providence I can say, that I have always found the promise verified, for he is a God keeping covenant, and full of faithfulness. This I have always had reason to note, but more especially been sensible of it since the death of my dear *Fidelio*; since then I have been necessitated to live by faith on the promises of a provident God. I have been enabled to trust, and never knew the promises to fail, nor the Lord to fall short of any word he hath spoken. How shall I praise thee, thou God of infinite fulness, who from thine own inexhaustible stores hath richly supplied all my wants! I long to

appear before thee, O thou immaculate Redeemer, that I may see thee in the effulgence of thy glory, for here I see darkly as in a glass. Many are the refreshing gales of sweet consolation which I have had in the ordinances of thy grace; but now, when I compare them with that unfathomable depth of undecaying comfort, which I see immediately before me, they are like the small dust of the balance when compared to the world; or like to the drop of water which hangs at the bucket, when compared to the vast ocean. O the divine blaze of heavenly glory, which already begins to beam upon my soul, even on this wilderness side of Jordan! O thou new and heavenly Jerusalem, I am already overcome with thine excellent beauties! Oh, what must it be when put into full possession! And, even now, nothing hinders me from feeding on the fattest of thy comforts, but this thin and almost rent veil of mortality. Let it once be rent, as soon it will, and I shall with unspeakable joy sustain all the stupendous blaze of thy unsullied glories.

“I long, oh! I long to join yonder glorious throng, yonder radiant church in the realms above. I long to press into yonder bright assembly, which by faith I see surrounding the eternal throne, that I might mingle my humble notes with their harmonious voices, and with them sing the praise of God and of the Lamb. Hasten thy pace, O ever tardy time! Ye moments, swiftly end your destined flight. Lord, shake my glass, that the sands may speedily pass through. But I see, holy and reverend is his name, that there remains but a few particles more in the life-end of my glass, and they will speedily be down: then face to face I shall see the glorious object of my supreme delight, and for ever offer up perfect adoration to Him that loved me, and washed me in his blood. With unspeakable delight I shall behold that glorious face which once was marred with *shame and spitting*. I

shall behold him for myself, and not for another. These eyes, which have so often turned aside after vanity, these very eyes, shall in transport gaze on the King in his beauty; this tongue shall delight to praise him eternity along; and these hands, which once were the instruments of unrighteousness, shall cast at his majestic feet the glorious crown wherewith this worthless head shall soon be adorned. O happy, happy day, that brings home the longing exile, and lands the weary pilgrim upon the shore of rest, to be ever, ever with the Lord!"

Fidelia finishing here, her friend again said to her: "My dear sister, I rejoice with you that the Lord is pleased to indulge you with such a measure of his sensible presence on this, which otherwise would be a day of severe trial to you; but the Redeemer's presence makes even DEATH itself not only tolerable, but desirable and easy. But in the midst of your sensible enjoyments you seem as if you had forgotten your three little children; tell me, *Fidelia*, have you no uneasiness at the thoughts of leaving them behind you in a land of sin and sorrow? Would it not, with submission to the divine will, be desirable to you to be spared to see them brought up to a capacity of doing for themselves?"

To whom *Fidelia* replied: "The Lord hath been a husband to the widow, and I am persuaded he will be a father to the fatherless, and an all-sufficient stay to the helpless orphan. My children are dear, but my Saviour is infinitely dearer to me; and I have got such a taste of the grapes of the heavenly Canaan, that I cannot think of abiding on this wilderness-side of DEATH. My heart is already gone over; oh, why do I tarry any longer behind! but the Lord's time is the best. Pray for me, my friends, that I may not offend the best of Beings by my impatience to be gone, but submissively wait for the dissolving moment." Then

her friend tenderly rejoined, "But have your companions in warfare no weight at all upon your mind? Can you with pleasure leave them in this inhospitable world?" She replied; "Alas! my friend, of what service can my presence be to a warfaring church? I can be of no use at all. But I know that He who hath chosen, purchased, and sanctified it, will safely keep it, and every individual member of it, to the perfect day: for of all whom the Father hath given to the Mediator, he hath not lost, he will not lose, any thing; no not the weakest, or the most contemptible: for all shall be gathered safe to his heavenly kingdom. Give the immortal love of a dying woman to our fellow church members, and tell them from me, that it is the last request of their dying friend, that they live at a greater distance from the world. There is, alas! too much, by far too much likeness betwixt the precious children of God, and the children of the world. Some of them, in a manner very unbecoming, court the fantastical honours, and others seem too eagerly to thirst after the perishing, unsatisfactory riches of this transitory and delusive world, which, if they could obtain, would all lose their beauty on a dying day. Oh! a dying day gives us clear views of things, and exceedingly diminishes the value of gold and silver. Bid them, therefore, behold the profits and honours of this world, with death-bed eyes, then they will readily declare that 'all is vanity.' And others of our friends there are, who but too much delight in the vain and empty pleasures of the flesh, which at best are no more than an aerial dream. But oh! tell them from me, that the honours of life are lighter than chaff, and will all be driven away when Christ comes with the fan in his hand, thoroughly to purge his floor; then, my friends, they will appear lighter than nothing, and altogether vanity. Oh, that they could be persuaded that gold and silver is one of the most dangerous

burdens that a Christian possibly can carry; the love of money is the root of all evil. They will never repent when they come to a death-bed, that they are not rich, and cannot leave fortunes for their children. Tell them that if the Almighty, in his wisdom, sees that riches are for their good, he will in his benevolence bestow them without their immoderate care, or without injuring their minds in the least. Oh, let Christians beware of accounting gain to be godliness. Tell them from me, that the pursuit of worldly pleasure is the certain way to dishonour their God, and destroy the peace of their own souls. Oh, persuade them, as Christians, to seek the things which come from above, where the blessed Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God. Let them know that conformity to the vain customs of the world is highly injurious to the cause and interest of Christ, and has a natural tendency to harden poor sinners in their rebellion against God. When they come to a death-bed as I am now, all those names of honour, the applause of mankind, and all the comfort which springs from the possession of riches, will vanish away as empty vapours and smoke. Verily, all things here below are vanity. The divine religion of the ever-loving and ever-lovely Jesus is the one thing needful; the only thing that will yield satisfaction on a dying day."

Fidelia having exhausted her strength, remained a considerable time silent, and *Veratio* turned himself toward me and said :

Now, *Novitio*, this is divine religion with a witness ; here are riches in the midst of poverty ; health in the midst of sickness ; joy in the midst of pain ; and glory rising out of misery. What an exalted soul is this ! How much of heaven is now let down into this blessed cottage ! How glorious ! How excellent is thy religion, O thou amiable Saviour of mankind ! Blessed

is he, the life of whose soul is the only begotten of the Father !

Know, my friend, that *Fidelia* was daughter to a worthy tradesman named *Philaletthes*, one who was a constant lover, and a punctual observer, of truth, as all that dealt with him would readily testify. *Philaletthes* was parent to a numerous offspring, whom he carefully instructed in the principles of religion. As soon as his tender infants began to lisp forth their innocent and child-like prattlings, he used to deal with them as rational creatures, and studied to impress their minds with a sense of the greatness and omnipresence of God ; particularly of the purity of his nature and his utter aversion of sin. It was his constant custom to maintain regularly, at a certain hour twice a day, the worship of God in his family, at which he took care that no business, however urgent, should hinder the attendance of either children or servants, accounting it his honour, as he found it his pleasure, to go before his family, in the worship of their Maker. And well knowing, that the Almighty delighteth more in the gates of Zion than in all the dwellings of Jacob, he carefully led his whole family duly to attend the public worship of God, during which he accustomed his children, from their youngest years, to a decent and becoming gravity in the house of prayer. He suffered no part of the holy sabbath to be devoted to vain amusements or worldly business ; the morning thereof was chiefly employed in divine worship, and in putting his family in mind of the solemnity of the sanctuary service which they were to enter upon ; and in the evening his care was to improve the sermons which they had heard, and administer suitable instructions to the various branches of his family, according to their several capacities. He greatly confided in that word of promise, " Train up a child in the way he

should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs xxii. 6. And although he perfectly knew that he could not give them grace, he believed it his duty to inure them to the forms of religion. Encouraged by the promise, and well knowing that human endeavours avail but little without divine influence, he was a fervent wrestler* with God for the blessing, and had the pleasure of seeing that his endeavours and prayers were not in vain; as his family, even from their younger years, were properly restrained from the fashionable vices which corrupt our youth, and were perfect strangers to the brilliancy of a ball, and the irreligious entertainment of a theatre. In the disposal of his children in marriage, he was not so careful about worldly advantages, as he was strictly nice in his inquiries, whether there was a likeness in their natural disposition, the visible appearance of real grace in the soul, and a harmony in their religious sentiments; for he well knew that unless husband and wife are of the same opinion, both with regard to doctrine and manner of worship, there is but little prospect of that union which is so essential to mutual happiness. *Fidelia* he married to a worthy young man of but a small fortune, whose name was *Fidelio*, a mechanical tradesman, who in their younger years sustained such losses in trade as reduced him to the necessity of supporting his family by the labour of his hands; and no labour he thought too hard to support his wife and children, whom he so tenderly loved. But, as one says in a certain place, it sometimes happens to a righteous person according to the desert of the wicked; so it happened to *Fidelia*; for it pleased the Lord a few years since to take her husband away from her at a very short notice, to possess the heavenly diadem to which he was appointed. Her fervent and faithful friend, her diligent provider being gone, she found

* Gen. xxxii. 24.

herself in a melancholy situation, left in an inhospitable world, with three tender and beloved infants, one of which was but just weaned from the breast. But her God, her faithful God, was the object of her trust. She sensibly felt the stroke, and was humbled under the afflicting dispensations; but never, never was the grieved *Fidelia* heard to alledge that the Almighty Disposer dealt hardly with her. Never was she known in a way of murmuring and impatience to say unto God, "What doest thou?"

On the other hand, she was careful to know, whether she had not purchased this affliction to herself, by an over esteem for, and too much dependance on her husband; thereby withholding a part of her heart from, and infringing her duty of full dependance on God. In the times of her deepest distress she was wont thus to reason: "I know, yea I am fully persuaded, that the Lord afflicteth not willingly; there must be necessity for it, ere he is pleased to apply the rod." Instead of mourning as one without hope, her principal care was, that the dispensation might be sanctified to her advantage and growth in grace, that she might live more upon, and rest more fully in, the Saviour who died for her. *Fidelia* was a woman who knew well how to plead a promise in the time of need; she was always but weak in body, but a powerful wrestler at the throne of grace; she was shy in courting, and modest in receiving, favours from man; but at the throne of grace she was importunate, and would not take a denial. Her circumstances being very low after the death of her husband, she was brought to the necessity of living by faith in a promising God, even for her's and her children's daily sustenance, which I assure you is far from being the easiest part of the exercise of faith.

Distressed *Fidelia* used to comfort herself in reflecting upon the regard which Jehovah has expressed



ASCENSION.

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towards the poor and needy, and especially his declaring himself "to be a husband to the widow, a father to the fatherless, and a stay to the helpless orphan;" and thus she was wont to reflect within herself, "the glorious God, who hath seen it meet to take away my husband, hath graciously promised to be a husband to me himself; and, if he will be my husband, as he hath said, he will surely act the part of the best of husbands. The husband's part is to direct, defend, and provide, for his spouse; and all this the Lord hath promised he will do for the widow who trusts in him. This is agreeable to the tenor of the promises in general, and in particular to that salutary word on which he has caused me to hope, where he hath declared himself a sun and a shield to his people. Here is light to lead and direct, here is heat to influence and quicken me in all my languor, and here is a shield for safety, a shield of protection from all enemies, outward and inward; he addeth, I will give grace to support under, and to sanctify afflictions; and when the work is finished, he says, I will give glory. This life is indeed a life of infinite wants, but here is provision made for them all; for it is added, 'I will withhold no good thing.' This is an ample provision made for all my necessities. Great as they are, the grace of the promise is infinitely greater. Here is consolatory supply for the most desolate widow. I will therefore trust in the Lord, and not be afraid; and, so trusting, I shall never be confounded, nor shall my hope be put to shame. This is the ground of all my confidence; he encourages the boldness of the weak, the poor, and needy, but abhors the timidity of the unbelieving. None are ever condemned for trusting in the Lord with a holy boldness, in proportion to their necessities; my necessities are great, therefore, O Lord, may my trust in thee be strong."—It was thus she communed with her own heart in profitable reflections upon the

promises of God. She was likewise accustomed early to tell her children, "that now they had no natural father to provide for and dispose of them: but that God had declared himself 'the father of the fatherless,' and she hoped that He would be a father to them." Earnestly did she recommend them to the grace and protection of the divine Shepherd, who bears the lambs on his arm, and nourisheth them in his bosom. She prayed, and she hoped that God would be the guardian of their infant years, train them up in his own fear, nurture, and admonition, provide for them things necessary, and dispose of them to the glory both of his providence and grace. Thus their daily prayers were unto the Lord, and to him were all her cares committed, nothing doubting, but in the unbounded beneficence of his nature he would take special care both of her and hers.

She lived in a constant reliance on the providence and promises of God, and was never disappointed, notwithstanding her faith was frequently tried as with fire; and now she is dying, could I paint to you the holy joys of her elevated soul, if you were possessed of all the wealth of the Indies, *Novitio*, you would willingly part with it, if it were possible that you could exchange your condition for such as hers. An explicit narration of *Fidelia's* experience would be of more use to the church of Christ, than the voluminous elaborate works of many learned doctors, who have not had the same experience: for there hath been more religion in one week of her life than in thirty years' preaching of some who are called masters in Israel. And now, *Novitio*, that you may know that God is not ashamed of the meanest of his saints, I have a mind once more to give you a view of the immaterial world; thereby you will see that the angels of God do not despise her because of her poverty.

This said, he again, in his usual manner, so strength-

ened my visual ray, that instantly I saw the place was filled with the heavenly hosts, who unweariedly ministered to the dying woman; and she, notwithstanding in the embraces of DEATH, was so transported with holy joy, that she forgot the pains of dying. So fervently glowed the seraphic flame in her heart, and in such profusion the joys of approaching eternity were poured into her soul, that all sensation of pain seemed to be gone.—By this time the lamp of nature only glimmered in the socket; she lay supinely stretched on her bed, longing and waiting for the dissolving moment: and so long as her voice continued articulate, she dispensed instructions to her friends, adoring the riches of electing, redeeming, and regenerating love. At last perceiving that nature's sparks were almost extinguished, with eyes sublimely elevated, and holy triumph smiling on her countenance, with a voice which could scarcely be heard, she said, "Come, Father, come; thou knowest I am waiting thy command."—These were the last words, and in a few moments after she quietly departed, and her glorified soul joined in fellowship with the ministers of heaven, formerly her invisible attendants. Now swift as thought they carried her away to the blissful regions of eternal day: where she was received with joyful acclamations by all the hosts of the heaven of heavens; and the ever-adorable Redeemer pronounced her blessed, saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, thou hast been faithful over a few things, therefore thou shalt be ruler over many." On which I thought a crown of righteousness was put upon her head by the pierced hand of the Redeemer; a palm of triumph given to her, and orders issued to put her in possession of one of the mansions near the jasper throne; where she strove to outdo Magdalene in praise, and to exalt her voice even above that of Mary the mother of our

Lord. Here was emulation without anger, the most earnest contention without any tincture of pride. Who should be least in their own esteem ; who should most glorify and exalt sovereignly free and distinguishing grace, were the springs of all their heavenly debates. Here Manasseh vied with the sweet singer of Israel, the man after God's own heart ; the crucified thief with Enoch and Abraham ; Ruth the Moabitess with Deborah, a mother of Israel ; Jairus the jailor contended with Paul the apostle ; and babes from the womb claimed right to sing louder than Solomon the wisest of men. Here parents strove to surpass their children, and children to exceed the praises of their parents ; masters their former servants, and servants their masters ; ministers their people, and people their ministers : and every one urged his claim by rational and consistent arguments. As I was listening to the sweet contention, and gazing on the unutterable glories of the heavenly world, my beloved sleep departed, the unwelcome morning rushed in upon me, and bereaved me of the precious delights I had enjoyed in the night. So I awoke to disappointment and sorrow, finding myself still in the tents of Kedar, possessed as heretofore of that unclean nature, whence every evil to me proceeds, and still to go burdened and groaning because of a body of DEATH whilst in this tabernacle. Yea, after all, perhaps to be tired of his world, and yet afraid to venture into another.

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